THE AFTER-SCHOOL SERIES

COLLEGE

GREEK COURSE IN ENGLISH

WILLIAM CLYDE WILKINSON

Cassiterides (?)
OCEANUS
CELTI
TERRA INCOGNITA
Pyrêné
Ligyes (?)
Cynetes
Iberi (?)
Tartessus
Pr. Solveis
Cyrnus I.
Sardo I.
Sicilia I.
Cyzantes
Carchedon
Zavecès
Lotophagi
Gindanes
Atlantes
Atarantes
Psylli
Nasamones
Garamantes
Troglodytæ
Æthiopes
Sigynnes
Neuri
Androphagi
Scythæ agricolæ
Getæ
Mysia
Lydia
Bithynia
Peloponnesus
Creta I.
MARE NOSTRUM
Adyrmachidæ
Memphis
Augila
Ammonii
Oasis
Thebæ
Syene
Elephantine
Tachompso
Automol
R. Nilus
LIBYA
OCEANUS

THE

WORLD

OF

HERODOTUS.

By the Same Author.

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.

ALREADY PUBLISHED.

PREPARATORY GREEK COURSE IN ENGLISH.

PREPARATORY LATIN COURSE IN ENGLISH.

IN PREPARATION.

COLLEGE LATIN COURSE IN ENGLISH.

THE AFTER-SCHOOL SERIES.

COLLEGE

GREEK COURSE

IN ENGLISH.

BY

WILLIAM CLEAVER WILKINSON.

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PREFACE.

THIS book is the third issue in a series of four volumes, devised on a novel plan for making possible, through the English language, a certain degree of culture in Greek and Latin letters.

The general scope and method of the series have already, in preceding issues, been sufficiently described. The particular purpose of the present volume is fully explained in the first chapter following.

To such readers as may chance to take up this book first in order, we will simply, in repetition, say that the two previous volumes were devoted to those parts of Greek literature, and Latin, respectively, which are usually studied by candidates for entrance to college. They were each commenced with a sketch of the geography and the history pertaining to the peoples that produced the literatures, together with a summary and characterization of the literatures themselves.

Each volume of the four is designed to be perfectly intelligible by itself alone; but all the volumes, on the other hand, stand in such mutual relation that each will be read with greater advantage in connection with its fellows in the series.

The Index of proper names at the close of this volume may occasionally be consulted with advantage by readers desirous of explanatory information not furnished in the text.

It is due that acknowledgment again be made of debt to Dr. J. H. VINCENT for his important part in the present series of volumes. The original idea of the series was his, not the writer's.

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N. B.—The stamp on the cover represents "The Hall in the Grove" at Chautauqua.

COLLEGE GREEK COURSE IN ENGLISH.

I.

COLLEGE STUDY OF GREEK.

It is the object of this volume to furnish readers not versed in any tongue but the English, with the means of obtaining, at their leisure and without change of residence on their part, approximately the same knowledge of Greek letters as is imparted to students during a four-years' stay in the average American college. Not an equivalent, but a substitute—the best substitute in the nature of the case practicable—for college culture in Greek, is what we here undertake to supply.

In pursuing the object thus described, we have, in the main, to follow a path pointed out for us by example and custom; in part, however, we necessarily have also to use an independent discretion of our own. Various colleges have various courses of Greek reading prescribed for their students. The same colleges even from time to time vary their courses, according to the judgment of the responsible heads of the department of Greek instruction. It thus happens that graduates of different colleges not unfrequently might find, upon comparison of their college experiences in the study of Greek, that the lines of their reading in the language had been far from wholly coincident. Nay, graduates of the same college, belonging to different classes, will sometimes—and this, it may be, under the same Greek

professor—have accomplished courses of study in Greek at points quite divergent one from another.

In such a state of the case, obviously our own true policy here must be to lay out, as well as we can, a kind of eclectic and average Greek course of our own. So we accordingly do. Readers of our volume will, therefore, not look to find themselves, as the result of their reading, conversant with altogether the same Greek literature—much less, with exactly the same portions of the same Greek literature—that were studied in college by the next college graduate they may chance, in conversation on the subject, to challenge to comparison of his experience with theirs. There will, between your own Greek reading, accomplished in English, and that of all college graduates, be points of contact, here or there, passages probably, longer or shorter, of strict coincidence; but your lines of familiarity with Greek classics will by no means blend into entire identity throughout with those of any college graduate whatever. Your conversance, however, with Greek letters will not necessarily be less, because it is other, than that of the graduate from college.

But, in order that you may judge independently for yourself under what comparative advantages and disadvantages you here pursue that course of Greek culture which your fellow-citizens in the widening republic of letters pursue at college, we are going now to descend a little into particulars in describing for you the work actually done or attempted in Greek, during their stay in college, by candidates for the so-called bachelor's degree in arts.

In some important respects, the American college differs from its European prototype. In Europe, the university student accomplishes his prescribed course of study in any way he may choose to adopt, aiming simply at being able to pass the tests of examination that await him only at long intervals of his progress, or perhaps barely once,

and that at the distant ultimate goal. In this country, the college student is examined not only at certain widely separated stations in his course, but every day. "Recitations," we Americans call these daily examinations. For the daily recitation of the class-room is less a teaching, than a testing, exercise. The testing is, indeed, in practice accompanied with some teaching. But the truest way in which to conceive the class-room recitation at college, as ordinarily administered, is in the light of an expedient adopted for securing regular and thorough private attention to their study from the students. A certain task, comprising, say, from one to two octavo pages of a Greek author, is assigned to-day for the class to report on ("recite") to-morrow. Each member is expected in the interval, with the aid of his grammar and his lexicon, to translate the passage for himself; and moreover, with the same aid, supplemented by the aid of such other books of reference as may be at his command, to examine carefully the points of etymology, of syntax, of prosody, of archæology, of geography, of topography, of history, of literary criticism, that may naturally be suggested by the task or lesson. When the hour of recitation arrives, the class assemble with their instructor, (professor or tutor,) and submit to examination. Each member of the class in his turn, (how frequently the turn recurs, and with what degree of regularity, to any one student, depends partly upon the number of the class, or the section, to which he belongs, and partly upon the individual habit of the instructor—of course it may be almost daily, or it may be not more than once or twice in a week,) each member, we say, of the class in rotation, is called upon by name to report or "recite." The moment that intervenes, after roll-call, before the professor names the first man to report, is a moment of suspense and excitement for all the members of the class—except such as, from the fact of their having recently responded to challenge, feel a comfortable degree of

assurance that the lightning will not strike them this time. This moment of uncertain expectation is repeated throughout the hour, at the close of each individual conscript's report—the tension generally exhibiting a remarkable tendency to increase and diminish alphabetically, according as the initial letter of a given man's name stands near or remote in order, reckoned from that belonging to the name of the student at the instant under fire. The professor, of course, has it in his power to make his method of proceeding so incalculable, that no member of the class can any day count with safety on exemption from summons to recite. A wholesome sense of ever-imminent danger, on the student's part, is to him a highly useful condition of faithful labor in preparing his lesson. Still, in most cases, the actual administration of the class-room falls into a kind of routine on which the observing student can reasonably make his calculations. Indeed, some regularity of rotation becomes at length a prescriptive law at college, which the professor infringes at the risk of complaint, overt or secret, on the part of the students. On the whole, it usually falls out that the teacher consults at once his own ease and the peace, perhaps too the real prosperity, of his class, in a tacit understanding established between him and them that each member may expect his turn of recitation to recur, with a good degree of regularity, once in about so many days.

The standard of performance in recitation varies greatly under different teachers, at different colleges, in different classes. It is never anywhere too high. College instructors are much embarrassed by imperfect ante-collegiate preparation on the part of their pupils. Preparatory teachers, in their turn, are much embarrassed by poor primary instruction preceding their own share in the training of the candidate for college. Primary teachers again often have just cause of complaining that their work with the child is not properly supported by intelligent parental influence at home. Edu-

cation is an edifice greatly, at every stage in the process of erection, dependent for its stability on the skill with which the successive under-courses of structure, down to the lowermost courses of all, are laid. We should be glad to hope that this series of books may, for a few persons at least, do something, however little, toward strengthening the edifice, at each joint of its upward springing toward the summit and crown. In the average existing state of the case, the standard of college recitation in Greek falls, as every qualified judge will pronounce, far short of what it might be. Students stumble a good deal in translating their author aloud in the class-room. They hesitate, they choose doubtfully, they change their choice, they fill in with inarticulate murmur between words, and in effect spend much time to make comparatively small progress. Ordinarily, it consumes the hour of recitation to go over an amount of text which ought to be dispatched in a quarter of that time. The consequence is that relatively little Greek is read in the class-room. The advance, as has been intimated, is at the rate of not more than two ordinary octavo pages a day. Thus, in one term of three months, allowance being made for Saturdays, (seldom used as work-days in Greek,) and for days given to special reviews and examinations, the total space traversed will be measured by, say, a hundred pages of text. This amount of reading may be taken as the average *maximum* accomplished in college in any one Greek author—it rarely being the case that to any one Greek author more than a single term of the college course is devoted. The number of terms in which Greek is studied differs for different colleges. The current tendency is, on the whole, in the direction of a smaller number rather than a larger. Five or six terms would, probably, be a fair estimate for the average.

As has been said, recitation proceeding from the student is accompanied during the same hour with instruction proceeding from the teacher. These two exercises, namely,

testing and teaching, are not always in practice kept rigidly separate from each other. The effect, however, of keeping them so—and thus of leaving the student to make his daily report of translation as best he can, entirely without interruption of any sort from the teacher, whether in the form of aid offered, question asked, or remark interjected—is in such a manner to expose shortcomings on the student's part to himself and to his classmates, that he and they together will be powerfully stimulated to acquit themselves without shortcomings if possible. Parents, by the way, can do a service that wise teachers will appreciate, by early and steadily requiring from their children in the preparatory school a high degree of neatness, promptness, swiftness, in the business of reciting. Get the boys and girls to translate their lessons aloud beforehand to you at home. You, we will say, do not feel qualified to decide whether or not their rendering is exactly faithful to the original text. No matter. You can at least decide whether they make intelligible sense, in tolerable English, and whether they move through their task with alertness and confidence. Insist that the important work of choosing words and constructions be conscientiously and thoughtfully done, and that it be done before recitation, not during recitation. If all college students would prepare their daily tasks in translating on this plan, there might as well as not be saved to the college officer certainly half, perhaps two thirds, of his hour, to spend, either before or after recitation proper, in the work of instruction proper. We must not here travel out of our own legitimate province, to offer suggestions on the general subject of classical study. We say what we here do say, in the way simply of showing how it comes about that so small a part of the field of Greek letters is actually traversed in class-room instruction at college; and how it is accordingly that, within the limited compass of a volume like the present, the college course of Greek literature may be not very inadequately represented in En-

glish. It is, in fact, the merest entrance into the various Greek authors taken up, that at best can be given to students at college. Six different authors, perhaps, are as many as on the average are introduced into the course.

Our plan is in this book to give our readers a taste of some ten or twelve Greek authors, representing four different departments of Greek literature. In history, there are, besides Xenophon previously presented, two great Greek names standing forth so conspicuously first among all rivals, that our choice is virtually made for us without our own choosing. He-rod'o-tus and Thu-cyd'i-des (Thu-sid'i-deez) will necessarily be our historians. Of Greek philosophers, Soc'ra-tes is easily foremost, with no peer for comparison. Socrates never wrote any thing. But his teaching was a flowing fountain that "watered all the schools" of the best ancient Greek philosophy. Let Plato, pupil and expounder to Socrates, be Greek philosopher for us. In poetry—Homer having already been given—we shall feel no hesitation in fixing upon the writers to be representative to English readers of the highest achievement in Greek. That great triad of names, Æs'chyl-us, (Es'kil-us,) Soph'o-cles, Eu-rip'i-des, for Greek tragedy; in Greek comedy, that master, solitary in his unchallenged pre-eminence, Ar-is-toph'a-nes; these, together with "burning Sappho," and the "Theban eagle," Pindar, to chant for us their "Æolian charms and Dorian lyrick odes," and perhaps also with The-oc'ri-tus and Mos'chus to yield us interlude of "rural ditties" "tempered to the oaten flute"—these, we say, compose a choir of melody and of harmony to which it will be the fault of the present choragus, if a numerous English audience do not delight to listen. Finally, we shall bid our readers "to the famous orators repair." Stormy De-mos'-the-nes, with brilliant Æs'chi-nes (Es'ki-neez) for foil, shall "fulmine" for us in that "resistless eloquence" of his, "from Macedon to Artaxerxes' throne."

Such is our plan. We proceed at once to carry it out.

HISTORY.

II

HERODOTUS.

Every body that has heard at all of Herodotus has heard of him as "the father of history." The title is bestowed deservedly on the bearer; still, the effect of it, kept as it is in almost inseparable association with this historian's name, is to create on the minds of readers not accurately acquainted with the facts, an impression of greater antiquity for the person described than in truth belongs to Herodotus.

The father of history, Herodotus, and the father of epic poetry, Homer, were separated from each other by a long, indeed an indefinitely long, period of time. When Homer lived, nobody certainly knows. When Herodotus lived, is a point of ancient chronology well ascertained. To Herodotus, born about 484 B. C., Homer, though fellow-countryman, was already an ancient. Five hundred years may have elapsed, after Homer wrote the world's first great epic, before Herodotus wrote the world's first great history. But Thucydides then promptly followed with his historical masterpiece—perhaps while Herodotus was still among the living.

What makes Herodotus differ so much in seeming antiquity from his younger contemporary, Thucydides, is largely the striking contrast in tone and manner between the two historians. Thucydides is strict, curt, severe, critical, philosophical; while Herodotus is full, flowing, digressive, fond of marvels, romantic. Herodotus was no less disposed to be truthful than was Thucydides after him; but for knowing how to be truthful, Thucydides was better equipped than was pio-

neer Herodotus. Again, it entered into the plan of Herodotus to report to us a great many things reported to him, that he by no means asked us to credit, that, in fact, he did not credit himself. Herodotus's credulity, together with his plan of reporting reports—to a great extent irrespectively of their

HERODOTUS.

probable truth—has gained for him a traditional and popular repute of untrustworthiness that he is far from deserving. The tendency of recent historical criticism, applied in the light of geographical exploration and archæological discovery,

has been steadily in the direction of raising the credit of Herodotus as a conscientious historian. This, however, must not be taken to mean that the whole of what Herodotus tells us is, in the main, to be accepted for true. So far from it, what Herodotus tells us will, when carefully examined, be found, in no small part, to consist of stories that we are compelled to reject for false. But then such stories in Herodotus are incidental and episodical in their nature. They may easily be detached from the main thread of the narrative, the main thread of the narrative remaining unharmed and continuous without them. Besides, although Herodotus was certainly not furnished with that guardian historical skepticism which served Thucydides so well in sifting for historical truth, and though therefore Herodotus sometimes himself believed where Thucydides would wisely have rejected; yet, as we have already said, and as in justice to Herodotus should never be forgotten, this faithful historical reporter generally introduced the things which we are forced to regard as not true, under a sufficiently distinct caveat of warning to the reader that the author was simply telling a tale as it was told to him.

Herodotus was very painstaking in his efforts to gain information. He traveled extensively. His work is, indeed, almost as much a book of travels as it is a book of history. The very name by which he called it indicates this as its character. For the word history, in the use of Herodotus, meant, not what it has come in present universal usage to mean, namely, a supposedly trustworthy account, written with a degree of philosophical insight into cause and effect, of transactions rising to a certain height of importance and dignity; but merely a report of investigations, researches, inquiries, undertaken by the author. This primary import of his name for his work is constantly to be borne in mind, as a condition essential to any wise estimate of the merit and value of Herodotus.

But, however Herodotus failed in the critical and philosophical aptitudes required to equip the ideal historian, certainly there was not wanting to him wisdom, or felicity, to choose for treatment an historical subject of commanding magnitude and interest. In truth, there is a kind of epic majesty and sweep to the conception of Herodotus's work. He felt himself to be, and he was, something of a poet in his history. It was perhaps in recognition of this poetical quality in Herodotus that the ancients divided his work into nine parts, to us known as books, inscribed severally with the names of the nine Muses. Poetical may, too, have been in part the motive that led him to write in the Ionic dialect, which he had to acquire, rather than in the Dorian dialect, to which he was born. The preference was acknowledgment, no doubt, of influence received from the example and inspiration of Homer. Prose had hardly begun to be written in Greek, when Herodotus undertook the task of composing his history. Prose writers, indeed, had preceded, but they were so far inferior to Herodotus that he seems rather to be his own sole master in style, than to be the pupil of any predecessors.

Here is the modest, simple, almost unconscious, way in which, stating his own subject and object, he commences his history:

> These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he publishes, in the hope of thereby preserving from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and of preventing the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the Barbarians from losing their due meed of glory; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud.

Contrast with the foregoing the elaborate and stately periods in which Macaulay sets forth his aim in writing his history of England. Judgments will probably vary as to how far the more demonstrative style of the great English master is due to a really higher conception, on his part, of his work, how far to the quite legitimate influence of a more

advanced and complex type of civilization environing him, and how far to a both general and individual taste less chastened and severe.

"Herodotus of Hal-i-car-nas'sus," the writer calls himself. Halicarnassus was a Dorian Greek colony on the coast of Asia Minor. In Halicarnassus, then, about 484 B. C., Herodotus was born. During one period of his life he spent a number of years in Athens. This was probably after he had written a good part of his history. At Athens—and, during his residence at Athens, in other Grecian cities—Herodotus, so runs the tradition, read his enchanting story aloud to eager audiences of Greeks. It is in connection with such a recital, said to have been given at Olympia, that a pleasing legend is told of young Thucydides as one of the hearers of Herodotus. They say that Thucydides wept on the occasion, and was moved by the experience of that day to turn his own attention to the writing of history. From Athens, leaving behind him there a brilliant society of intellectual peers—it was that "golden prime," the age of Per'i-clēs—Herodotus removed with an Athenian colony to Thu'ri-i, in Italy, where he spent many years completing, elaborating, and retouching his history. When and where he died is not certainly known.

Beyond what has now been related, nothing material that rests on any trustworthy authority remains to be said of the life of Herodotus. His early travels, undertaken for the sake of his history, might seem to imply that he had some private fortune on which, year after year, he could draw to meet the demands of a mode of life so very expensive. But it would have been not unlike a typical Greek, if, with his literary quest, he had combined some quest of business to make his journeyings pay their own way.

It will have been observed that Herodotus puts his object in composing his history into a form of statement sufficiently large and vague to admit of much freedom and latitude in

treatment. "The Greeks and the Barbarians" made up to Herodotus the whole world of mankind. However, when Herodotus here said the Barbarians, he, of course, must have meant chiefly the Asiatics. At least it is of the hostile historical contact between the Greeks and the Asiatics, especially between the Greeks and the Persians, with what led up to that contact, that his narrative treats. The ultimate objective points at which he aims are, first, Mar'a-thon, and then Ther-mop'y-læ and Sal'amis, with Pla-tæ'a and Myc'a-le in sequel. But to reach these points, the history takes a long start from the origin of the Persian empire, nay, from the origin of those empires older than the Persian which in due time the Persian received and swallowed up. You might suppose that Herodotus, being a Greek, would magnify and glorify the Barbarians, if at all, only in order the more to magnify and glorify the Greeks by whom in the end the Barbarians were successfully withstood. But this is not the case. Herodotus displays a genuine cosmopolitan spirit. Without ulterior rhetorical aim, he gives the Barbarian full praise, and he does not spare full due of blame to the Greek.

It falls within the generously comprehensive design of this history to treat of Lydia, of Egypt, of Babylon, of Scythia, of Libya, as well as of Persia and Greece. Whoever of our readers has leisure for the purpose would find a perusal of the entire text of Herodotus a genuine recreation. There is a satisfactory English translation accessible, from the hand of Mr. George Rawlinson, enriched with copious notes from two eminent scholars and archæologists, namely, Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir J. G. Wilkinson. From this translation we take the extracts with which we now proceed to give our readers their taste of Herodotus.

We could easily fill all the pages of the present volume with such selections from Herodotus as would delight every reader. Our difficulty will be, not in finding, but in setting

aside. The book on Egypt has a peculiar interest from the fact of its being the only literature to furnish information concerning that country parallel with the information contained in the Bible. The account of Babylon is also very inviting. On the whole, however, we limit ourselves chiefly here to two other parts of the history. The first of these is the story of Crœsus, (Kre'sus,) and the second is the invasion of Xerxes (Zerks'ēz.) In these two parts as much interest centres as in any, and they together illustrate best the peculiar theory of human life upon which Herodotus conceived and composed his history. This pensive-minded man saw in all human experience constantly recurring proofs that the gods envied and revenged excessive prosperity. His whole narrative is, as it were, an illustrated homily on this idea for text.

Crœsus is that Lydian monarch of whom every body has heard as the proverb of wealth. Some readers may recall an allusion to him and his fate contained in the Preparatory Greek Course in English. He was an Asiatic despot, but he was an unusually attractive representative of his kind. Herodotus has made for us a delightful romance of the fortunes of Crœsus.

It is as having, according to Herodotus, been the first Asiatic to commence hostilities against the Greeks, that Crœsus comes in our historian's way. Crœsus brought under his dominion the Greek colonies in Asia Minor. The Lydian Empire was now at its height. Sardis, the capital, was a metropolis of wealth and culture. It became a resort for the sages of Greece. Crœsus welcomed these to his court with something of the same munificence and grace of royal hospitality that, in his time, Louis XIV. exercised at Versailles. Among the Greek celebrities to visit Sardis was Solon, whom Crœsus made his own guest, lodging him in his palace. We now let Herodotus take up the story in his own charmingly simple, pellucid, and withal loitering narrative strain:

He [Crœsus] bade his servants conduct Solon over his treasuries, and show him all their greatness and magnificence. When he had seen them all, and, so far as time allowed, inspected them, Crœsus addressed this question to him: "Stranger of Athens, we have heard much of thy wisdom and of thy travels through many lands, from love of knowledge and a wish to see the world. I am curious, therefore, to inquire of thee, whom, of all the men that thou hast seen, thou deemest the most happy?" This he asked because he thought himself the happiest of mortals: but Solon answered him without flattery, according to his true sentiments, "Tellus of Athens, sire." Full of astonishment at what he heard, Crœsus demanded sharply, "And wherefore dost thou deem Tellus happiest?" To which the other replied, "First, because his country was flourishing in his days, and he himself had sons both beautiful and good, and he lived to see children born to each of them, and these children all grew up; and further because, after a life spent in what our people look upon as comfort, his end was surpassingly glorious. In a battle between the Athenians and their neighbors near Eleusis, he came to the assistance of his countrymen, routed the foe, and died upon the field most gallantly. The Athenians gave him a public funeral on the spot where he fell, and paid him the highest honors."

Thus did Solon admonish Crœsus by the example of Tellus, enumerating the manifold particulars of his happiness. When he had ended, Crœsus inquired a second time, who after Tellus seemed to him the happiest, expecting that, at any rate, he would be given the second place. "Cle'o-bis and Bi'to," Solon answered; "they were of Argive race; their fortune was enough for their wants, and they were besides endowed with so much bodily strength that they had both gained prizes at the Games. Also this tale is told of them: There was a great festival in honor of the goddess Juno at Argos, to which their mother must needs be taken in a car. Now the oxen did not come home from the field in time; so the youths, fearful of being too late, put the yoke on their own necks, and themselves drew the car in which their mother rode. Five and forty furlongs did they draw her, and stopped before the temple. This deed of theirs was witnessed by the whole assembly of worshipers, and then their life closed in the best possible way. Herein, too, God showed forth most evidently how much better a thing for man death is than life. For the Argive men stood thick around the car and extolled the vast strength of the youths; and the Argive warriors extolled the mother who was blessed with such a pair of sons; and the mother herself, overjoyed at the deed and at the praises it had won, standing straight before the image, besought the goddess to bestow on

Cleobis and Bito, the sons who had so mightily honored her, the highest blessing to which mortals can attain. Her prayer ended, they offered sacrifice, and partook of the holy banquet, after which the two youths fell asleep in the temple. They never woke more, but so passed from the earth. The Argives, looking on them as among the best of men, caused statues of them to be made, which they gave to the shrine at Delphi."

When Solon had thus assigned these youths the second place, Crœsus broke in angrily, "What! stranger of Athens, is my happiness, then, so utterly set at naught by thee, that thou dost not even put me on a level with private men?"

"O Crœsus," replied the other, "thou askedst a question concerning the condition of man, of one who knows that the power above us is full of jealousy, and fond of troubling our lot. A long life gives one to witness much, and experience much one's self, that one would not choose. Seventy years I regard as the limit of the life of man. In these seventy years are contained, without reckoning intercalary months, twenty-five thousand and two hundred days. Add an intercalary month to every other year, that the seasons may come round at the right time, and there will be, besides the seventy years, thirty-five such months, making an addition of one thousand and fifty days. The whole number of the days contained in the seventy years will thus be twenty-six thousand two hundred and fifty, whereof not one but will produce events unlike the rest. Hence man is wholly accident. For thyself, O Crœsus, I see that thou art wonderfully rich, and art the lord of many nations; but with respect to that whereon thou questionest me, I have no answer to give, until I hear that thou hast closed thy life happily. For assuredly he who possesses great store of riches is no nearer happiness than he who has what suffices for his daily needs, unless it so hap that luck attend upon him, and so he continue in the enjoyment of all his good things to the end of life. For many of the wealthiest men have been unfavored of fortune, and many whose means were moderate, have had excellent luck. Men of the former class excel those of the latter but in two respects; these last excel the former in many. The wealthy man is better able to content his desires, and to bear up against a sudden buffet of calamity. The other has less ability to withstand these evils, (from which, however, his good luck keeps him clear,) but he enjoys all these following blessings: he is whole of limb, a stranger to disease, free from misfortune, happy in his children, and comely to look upon. If, in addition to all this, he end his life well, he is of a truth the man of whom thou art in search, the man who may rightly be termed happy.

Call him, however, until he die, not happy, but fortunate. Scarcely, indeed, can any man unite all these advantages: as there is no country which contains within it all that it needs, but each, while it possesses some things, lacks others, and the best country is that which contains the most; so no single human being is complete in every respect—something is always lacking. He who unites the greatest number of advantages, and retaining them to the day of his death then dies peaceably, that man alone, sire, is, in my judgment, entitled to bear the name of 'happy.' But in every matter it behoves us to mark well the end: for oftentimes God gives men a gleam of happiness, and then plunges them into ruin."

Such was the speech which Solon addressed to Crœsus, a speech which brought him neither largess nor honor. The king saw him depart with much indifference, since he thought that a man must be an arrant fool who made no account of present good, but bade men always wait and mark the end.

After Solon had gone away, a dreadful vengeance, sent of God, came upon Crœsus, to punish him, it is likely, for deeming himself the happiest of men.

In the last sentence foregoing, Herodotus, as the reader will notice, lets slip that favorite philosophy of his concerning human life. The gods, he believed, were jealous against the too prosperous. The story of Crœsus is made by him a kind of romance with a purpose—the purpose being to inculcate this moral. The dreadful vengeance impending, of which Herodotus speaks, is circumstantially narrated through several of his pages. The substance is as follows: Crœsus dreamed that of his two sons, his favorite, A'tys, a noble youth, would perish by a weapon of iron. The apprehensive father took elaborate precautions to save the life of his son. He had the youth marry and give up the chances of war. Vain was the paternal care. In a boar-hunt—the prince having begged the privilege of joining it, with the argument to his father that the boar at least had no weapon of iron to be guarded against—Atys was slain by a spear from the hand of a huntsman, hurled, with wrong aim, at the beast. Two years Crœsus mourned the loss of his son. At the end of

this time, news arrived at his court that interrupted his indulgence of grief. It was news of Cyrus's progress in power as king of the Persians. Crœsus sent to Delphi—having first tested various oracles of repute and been with that at Delphi best satisfied—to inquire whether he should make war upon Cyrus. He got for reply a doubtfully encouraging message: 'If he made war upon Cyrus, he would overthrow a great empire.' Whose empire, his own or Cyrus's? That was the question—but it was not a question with Crœsus.

Crœsus had got one oracular reply to his mind, and he wanted another. The Delphian authorities were willing to gratify so munificent an inquirer. For would our readers like to know what Crœsus had paid of his own accord in advance for the ambiguous response that pleased him so? Well, he first sacrificed three thousand beasts of every kind proper for sacrifice, and having accumulated "couches coated with silver and with gold, and golden goblets and robes and vests of purple," he burned them all in offering to the god. He next "melted over a vast quantity of gold and ran it into ingots," in number one hundred and seventeen, each weighing about two hundred and seventy pounds, (French.) These massy gold ingots, together with a statue in gold of a lion, two capacious bowls, one of silver and one of gold; four silver casks; two vases, one of silver and one of gold; the figure of a woman in solid gold; and, in addition, his queen's necklace and her girdles, he sent to Delphi to propitiate Apollo. The foregoing is, according to Herodotus, but a partial list of Crœsus's presents to the oracle. It is probable that this account is neither fabulous altogether, nor even fabulously extravagant. The river Pac-to'lus, said to have brought down sands of gold, flowed through the Lydian capital, Sardis. Crœsus's father had, through many "days ordered in a wealthy peace," amassed treasure for bequeathing to his son. There is no reason to doubt that Crœsus

was, indeed, the enormously rich man he is represented to have been. And he was lavish in proportion.

As we said, Crœsus was hungry for a second oracular response. He sent to ask whether his kingdom would be of long duration. The Pythoness, Apollo's organ of prophecy, gave this reply, versified, according to custom:

"Wait till the time shall come when a mule is monarch of Media;
Then, thou delicate Lydian, away to the pebbles of Hermus,
Haste, O! haste thee away, nor blush to behave like a coward."

The sequel will show our readers how this enigmatical response could bear an interpretation very different from the obvious one which Crœsus complacently put upon it.

On the strength of his two oracular assurances, the Lydian monarch went about his war against Cyrus. This Cyrus, it must be understood, is Cyrus the Elder, or Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Persian Empire. While war was thus preparing, a certain Lydian came forward and gave his sovereign some excellent advice, which Herodotus reports and remarks upon, as follows:

"Thou art about, O, King, to make war against men who wear leathern trousers, and have all their other garments of leather; who feed not on what they like, but on what they can get from a soil that is sterile and unkindly; who do not indulge in wine, but drink water; who possess no figs, nor any thing else that is good to eat. If, then, thou conquerest them, what canst thou get from them, seeing that they have nothing at all? But if they conquer thee, consider how much that is precious thou wilt lose: if they once get a taste of our pleasant things, they will keep such hold of them that we shall never be able to make them loose their grasp. For my part, I am thankful to the gods, that they have not put it into the hearts of the Persians to invade Lydia."

Crœsus was not persuaded by this speech, though it was true enough; for before the conquest of Lydia, the Persians possessed none of the luxuries or delights of life.

Cyrus did not wait for Crœsus. The first encounter proved a drawn battle. Crœsus retired within his capital, intending to resume hostilities in the spring. He little knew the

character of his antagonist. Cyrus advanced unannounced on Sardis. The Lydians were amazed, but they went outside of their walls, and gave their enemies battle. To the Lydian cavalry, Crœsus's strong military arm, Cyrus opposed a troop of camels. At the first smell of the camels the horses turned back. Crœsus was defeated, and he had now to stand a siege within the walls of his capital.

We may seize the opportunity, while this siege is in progress, to illustrate somewhat more fully the historical method of Herodotus. We go back a little to find a bit of superstitious fable with which, according to his wont, our author thought fit to delay and diversify his narrative. Crœsus, after that first indecisive engagement, is nourishing his fallacious sense of security against offensive action proceeding from Cyrus. Herodotus now:

> While Crœsus was still in this mind, all the suburbs of Sardis were found to swarm with snakes, on the appearance of which the horses left feeding in the pasture-grounds, and flocked to the suburbs to eat them. The king, who witnessed the unusual sight, regarded it very rightly as a prodigy. He, therefore, instantly sent messengers to the soothsayers of Telmessus to consult them upon the matter. His messengers reached the city, and obtained from the Telmessians an explanation of what the prodigy portended, but fate did not allow them to inform their lord; for ere they entered Sardis on their return, Crœsus was a prisoner. What the Telmessians had declared was, that Crœsus must look for the entry of an army of foreign invaders into his country, and that when they came they would subdue the native inhabitants; since the snake, said they, is a child of earth, and the horse, a warrior and a foreigner. Crœsus was already a prisoner when the Telmessians thus answered his inquiry, but they had no knowledge of what was taking place at Sardis, or of the fate of the monarch.

Cyrus takes Sardis; but our interest centres about the person and fortune of Crœsus. Herodotus again:

> With respect to Crœsus himself, this is what befell him at the taking of the town. He had a son, of whom I made mention above, a worthy youth, whose only defect was that he was deaf and dumb. In the days of his prosperity Crœsus had done the utmost that he could for him, and

among other plans which he had devised, had sent to Delphi to consult the oracle on his behalf. The answer which he had received from the Pythoness ran thus:

"Lydian, wide-ruling monarch, thou wondrous simple Crœsus,
Wish not ever to hear in thy palace the voice thou hast prayed for,
Uttering intelligent sounds. Far better thy son should be silent!
Ah! woe worth the day when thine ear shall first list to his accents."

When the town was taken, one of the Persians was just going to kill Crœsus, not knowing who he was. Crœsus saw the man coming, but, under the pressure of his affliction, did not care to avoid the blow, not minding whether or no he died beneath the stroke. Then this son of his, who was voiceless, beholding the Persian as he rushed toward Crœsus, in the agony of his fear and grief, burst into speech and said: "Man, do not kill Crœsus." This was the first time that he had ever spoken a word, but afterward he retained the power of speech for the remainder of his life.

Thus was Sardis taken by the Persians, and Crœsus himself fell into their hands, after having reigned fourteen years, and been besieged in his capital fourteen days; thus, too, did Crœsus fulfill the oracle, which said that he should destroy a mighty empire—by destroying his own. Then the Persians who had made Crœsus prisoner brought him before Cyrus. Now a vast pile had been raised by his orders, and Crœsus, laden with fetters, was placed upon it, and with him twice seven of the sons of the Lydians. I know not whether Cyrus was minded to make an offering of the first-fruits to some god or other, or whether he had vowed a vow and was performing it, or whether, as may well be, he had heard that Crœsus was a holy man, and so wished to see if any of the heavenly powers would appear to save him from being burnt alive. However it might be, Cyrus was thus engaged, and Crœsus was already on the pile, when it entered his mind in the depth of his woe that there was a divine warning in the words which had come to him from the lips of Solon: "No one while he lives is happy." When this thought smote him he fetched a long breath, and breaking his deep silence groaned out aloud, thrice uttering the name of Solon. Cyrus caught the sounds, and bade the interpreters inquire of Crœsus who it was he called on. They drew near and asked him, but he held his peace, and for a long time made no answer to their questionings, until at length, forced to say something, he exclaimed, "One I would give much to see converse with every monarch." Not knowing what he meant by this reply, the interpreters begged him to explain himself; and as they pressed for an an-

swer, and grew to be troublesome, he told them how, a long time before, Solon, an Athenian, had come and seen all his splendor, and made light of it ; and how whatever he had said to him had fallen out exactly as he foreshowed, although it was nothing that especially concerned him, but applied to all mankind alike, and most to those who seemed to themselves happy. Meanwhile, as he thus spoke, the pile was lighted, and the outer portion began to blaze. Then Cyrus, hearing from the interpreters what Crœsus had said, relented, bethinking himself that he, too, was a man, and that it was a fellow-man, and one who had once been as blessed by fortune as himself, that he was burning alive ; afraid, moreover, of retribution, and full of the thought that whatever is human is insecure. So he bade them quench the blazing fire as quickly as they could, and take down Crœsus and the other Lydians, which they tried to do, but the flames were not to be mastered.

Then the Lydians say that Crœsus, perceiving by the efforts made to quench the fire that Cyrus had relented, and seeing also that all was in vain, and that the men could not get the fire under, called with a loud voice upon the god Apollo, and prayed him, if he had ever received at his hands any acceptable gift, to come to his aid, and deliver him from his present danger. As thus with tears he besought the god, suddenly, though up to that time the sky had been clear and the day without a breath of wind, dark clouds gathered, and the storm burst over their heads with rain of such violence, that the flames were speedily extinguished. Cyrus, convinced by this that Crœsus was a good man and a favorite of heaven, asked him, after he was taken off the pile, who it was that had persuaded him to lead an army into his country, and so become his foe rather than continue his friend? to which Crœsus made answer as follows: "What I did, O king, was to thy advantage and to my own loss. If there be blame, it rests with the god of the Greeks, who encouraged me to begin the war. No one is so foolish as not to prefer peace to war, in which, instead of sons burying their fathers, fathers bury their sons. But the gods willed it so."

Thus did Crœsus speak. Cyrus then ordered his fetters to be taken off, and made him sit down near himself, and paid him much respect, looking upon him, as did also the courtiers, with a sort of wonder. Crœsus, wrapped in thought, uttered no word. After a while, happening to turn and perceive the Persian soldiers engaged in plundering the town, he said to Cyrus, "May I now tell thee, O king, what I have in my mind, or is silence best?" Cyrus bade him speak his mind boldly. Then he put this question: "What is it, O Cyrus, which those men yonder are doing so busily?" "Plundering thy city," Cyrus answered,

"and carrying off thy riches." "Not my city," rejoined the other, "nor my riches. They are not mine any more. It is thy wealth which they are pillaging."

Cyrus, struck by what Crœsus had said, bade all the court to withdraw, and then asked Crœsus what he thought it best for him to do as regarded the plundering. Crœsus answered: "Now that the gods have made me thy slave, O Cyrus, it seems to me that it is my part, if I see any thing to thy advantage, to show it to thee. Thy subjects, the Persians, are a poor people, with a proud spirit. If, then, thou lettest them pillage and possess themselves of great wealth, I will tell thee what thou hast to expect at their hands. The man who gets the most, look to having him rebel against thee. Now then, if my words please thee, do thus, O king: Let some of thy body-guards be placed as sentinels at each of the city gates, and let them take their booty from the soldiers as they leave the town, and tell them that they do so because the tenths are due to Jupiter. So wilt thou escape the hatred they would feel if the plunder were taken away from them by force, and they, seeing that what is proposed is just, will do it willingly.

Cyrus was beyond measure pleased with this advice, so excellent did it seem to him. He praised Crœsus highly, and gave orders to his body-guard to do as he had suggested. Then, turning to Crœsus, he said: "O Crœsus, I see that thou art resolved both in speech and act to show thyself a virtuous prince: ask me, therefore, whatever thou wilt as a gift at this moment." Crœsus replied: "O my lord, if thou wilt suffer me to send these fetters to the god of the Greeks, whom I once honored above all other gods, and ask him if it is his wont to deceive his benefactors—that will be the highest favour thou canst confer on me." Cyrus upon this inquired what charge he had to make against the god.

Then Crœsus gave him a full account of all his projects, and of the answers of the oracle, and of the offerings which he had sent, on which he dwelt especially, and told him how it was the encouragement given him by the oracle which had led him to make war upon Persia. All this he related, and at the end again besought permission to reproach the god with his behavior. Cyrus answered with a laugh, "This I readily grant thee, and whatever else thou shalt at any time ask at my hands." Crœsus, finding his request allowed, sent certain Lydians to Delphi, enjoining them to lay his fetters upon the threshold of the temple, and ask the god, if he were not ashamed of having encouraged him, as the destined destroyer of the empire of Cyrus, to begin a war with Persia, of which such were the first-fruits? As they said this, they

were to point to the fetters ; and further they were to inquire, if it was the wont of the Greek gods to be ungrateful?

Of course Apollo easily justified himself. He had simply to explain that Crœsus had mistaken the meaning of what the oracle said. First, Crœsus had, indeed, destroyed a great kingdom, only it happened to be his own kingdom, instead of Cyrus's: secondly, Cyrus was that mule-king of Media whom the oracle had bidden Crœsus fear—for Cyrus was born of a Median mother to a Persian father.

Lydia is now dismissed by Herodotus, in a few words of general description. With Crœsus the historian is far from yet being done. Once, in connection with their captive monarch, the subject Lydians fall again under notice—in a subsequent paragraph, which we violate the order of Herodotus to introduce here. Cyrus is annoyed at news of insurrection against himself in Sardis; whereupon, turning to Crœsus, kept close by his side—the Persian conqueror was now on his way to Ag-bat'a-na [Ec-bat'a-na]—he said, (we give the words of Herodotus :)

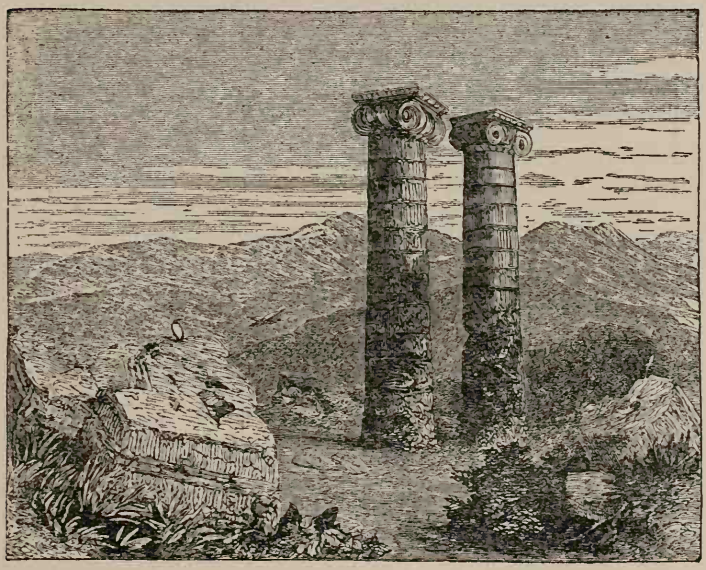
"Where will all this end, Crœsus, thinkest thou? It seemeth that these Lydians will not cease to cause trouble both to themselves and others. I doubt me if it were not best to sell them all for slaves. Methinks what I have now done is as if a man were to kill the father and then spare the child. Thou, who wert something more than a father to thy people, I have seized and carried off, and to that people I have intrusted their city. Can I then feel surprise at their rebellion?" Thus did Cyrus open to Crœsus his thoughts ; whereat the latter, full of alarm lest Cyrus should lay Sardis in ruins, replied as follows : "O my king, thy words are reasonable ; but do not, I beseech thee, give full vent to thy anger, nor doom to destruction an ancient city, guiltless alike of the past and of the present trouble. I caused the one and in my own person now pay the forfeit. Pactyas has caused the other, he to whom thou gavest Sardis in charge ; let him bear the punishment. Grant, then, forgiveness to the Lydians, and to make sure of their never rebelling against thee, or alarming thee more, send and forbid them to keep any weapons of war, command them to wear tunics under their cloaks, and to put buskins upon their legs, and make them bring up their sons to

cithern-playing, harping, and shop-keeping. So wilt thou soon see them become women instead of men, and there will be no more fear of their revolting from thee."

Crœsus thought the Lydians would even so be better off than if they were sold for slaves, and, therefore, gave the above advice to Cyrus, knowing that unless he brought forward some notable suggestion, he would not be able to persuade him to alter his mind.

Is not history written in the style of Herodotus delightful? In whatever proportion true may be the foregoing explanation, suggested by our author, of the fact—the fact certainly is that the Lydians became a proverb of effeminate refinement. Their addiction to music and pleasure explains the allusion in Milton's L'Allegro,

> And ever against eating cares
> Lap me in soft Lydian airs.



RUINS OF SARDIS.

Our readers would wish to see with what easy turn of digression Herodotus enters upon his retrospective account of Persian affairs. We recur to the point at which he dismissed the topic of Lydia. Herodotus says:

> Thus far I have been engaged in showing how the Lydians were brought under the Persian yoke. The course of my history now compels me to inquire who this Cyrus was by whom the Lydian empire was destroyed, and by what means the Persians had become the lords paramount of Asia. And herein I shall follow those Persian authorities whose object it appears to be not to magnify the exploits of Cyrus, but to relate the simple truth. I know besides three ways in which the story of Cyrus is told, all differing from my own narrative.

What with his dismissing and his choosing of accounts, a highly romantic tale Herodotus makes of the infancy and youth of Cyrus. We cannot now repeat it. With the remark that the germs of Xenophon's romance, the Cy-ro-pæ-di'a, are here, return we to our hero, Crœsus. But, on our path of return, we suffer ourselves to be caught by one of those flowers of legend with which Herodotus everywhere so thickly plants his vernal pages. This is but a little wayside bloom—we may cull it as we pass. Of the Lycians, a people conquered by Cyrus, Herodotus says:

> They have one singular custom in which they differ from every other nation in the world. They take the mother's and not the father's name. Ask a Lycian who he is, and he answers by giving his own name, that of his mother, and so on in the female line.

Readers of Tennyson will remember an allusion in The Princess which the foregoing passage explains:

> Appraised the Lycian custom.

The allusion occurs in an abstract given by the poet of a lecture by Lady Psyche, [Si'ke,) running rapidly over the historic instances illustrative of woman's relative position in different ages and countries.

An interval of fifteen years after the fall of Sardis has

elapsed, and Cyrus, always apparently with Crœsus in company, roars on in his career of conquest. He now marches against Babylon, which city, with its wonders, Herodotus, upon so obvious an occasion, proceeds at great length to describe. We shall not have space for the particulars of this description. The manner of the final taking of Babylon by Cyrus is remarkable. According to Herodotus, he adopted a plan, which, with the results attending its execution, we state in the historian's own words:

> He placed a portion of his army at the point where the river [Euphrates] enters the city, and another body at the back of the place where it issues forth, with orders to march into the town by the bed of the stream, as soon as the water became shallow enough; he then himself drew off with the unwarlike portion of his host, and made for the place where Ni-to'cris dug the basin for the river, where he did exactly what she had done formerly; he turned the Euphrates by a canal into the basin, which was then a marsh, on which the river sank to such an extent that the natural bed of the stream became fordable. Hereupon the Persians who had been left for the purpose at Babylon by the river-side, entered the stream, which had now sunk so as to reach about midway up a man's thigh, and thus got into the town. Had the Babylonians been apprised of what Cyrus was about, or had they noticed their danger, they would not have allowed the entrance of the Persians within the city, which was what ruined them utterly, but would have made fast all the street gates which gave upon the river, and mounting upon the walls along both sides of the stream, would so have caught the enemy as it were in a trap. But, as it was, the Persians came upon them by surprise and so took the city. Owing to the vast size of the place, the inhabitants of the central parts (as the residents at Babylon declare) long after the outer parts of the town were taken knew nothing of what had chanced, but as they were engaged in a festival, continued dancing and reveling until they learnt the capture but too certainly. Such, then, were the circumstances of the first taking of Babylon.

Herodotus is not considered to be of the highest authority in Babylonian history. His statements have in many points to be corrected by comparison of the native historian, Bero'sus, (extant only in fragments,) of Scripture, and of monumental inscriptions lately discovered, or lately first de-

ciphered. It was near a hundred years after the capture of Babylon by Cyrus, that Herodotus visiting the city gathered his information, as best he could, chiefly from the mouths of the people. Our readers will be much interested in collating carefully with the preceding extract the scriptural allusions, contained in Isaiah, in Jeremiah, and in Daniel, to the taking of Babylon. Nearly two centuries before the event, Isaiah, in one of his visions of prophecy, had foreseen it and exclaimed, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground." More than a century later than Isaiah, Jeremiah, himself forerunning fifty years or more the capture of Babylon, descends to specification minute enough to be very hazardous for the repute of a prophet. The points of coincidence between Scripture, on the one hand, and the history of Herodotus commented by Berosus and by archæology, on the other, are striking. They receive due attention in notes to some of the learned essays accompanying Mr. Rawlinson's translation of our author.

But we, have our readers forgotten? were on our way to find Crœsus again. Crœsus, though, as we are left to suppose, personally present throughout, does not by name appear at all in the course of what Herodotus tells us of Babylon. We shall have to go forward to the next stage, and the last, of Cyrus's progress in conquest, before Crœsus re-enters the drama. One bit of traveler's gossip about the customs of the Babylonian people is too curious not to be given our readers by the way, in the full text of Herodotus:

> Of their customs, whereof I shall now proceed to give an account, the following (which I understand belongs to them in common with the Illyrian tribe of the En'e-tī) is the wisest in my judgment. Once a year in each village, the maidens of age to marry were collected all together into one place; while the men stood around them in a circle. Then a herald called up the damsels one by one, and offered them for sale. He began with the most beautiful. When she was sold for no small sum of money, he offered for sale the one who came next to her in

beauty. All of them were sold to be wives. The richest of the Babylonians who wished to wed, bid against each other for the loveliest maidens, while the humbler wife-seekers, who were indifferent about beauty, took the more homely damsels with marriage-portions. For the custom was, that when the herald had gone through the whole number of the beautiful damsels, he should then call up the ugliest—a cripple, if there chanced to be one—and offer her to the men, asking who would agree to take her with the smallest marriage-portion. And the man who offered to take the smallest sum had her assigned to him. The marriage-portions were furnished by the money paid for the beautiful damsels, and thus the fairer maidens portioned out the uglier. No one was allowed to give his daughters in marriage to the man of his choice, nor might any one carry away the damsel whom he had purchased without finding bail really and truly to make her his wife; if, however, it turned out that they did not agree, the money might be paid back. All who liked might come even from distant villages and bid for the women. This was the best of all their customs, but it has now fallen into disuse.

The Mas-sag'e-tæ — whom our readers had better not trouble themselves to try to locate very definitely on the map of the world—are the next objects of Cyrus's hostile ambition. The thing about them at present interesting to us is, that they were ruled over by a queen whose name is historic. It is that Tom'y-ris to whom Tennyson, ranging wide for all pertinent instance, alludes in his "Princess;" the poet provides, as an architectural decoration to the palace-college of the ladies, some

> Great bronze valves, embossed with Tomyris
> And what she did to Cyrus after fight.

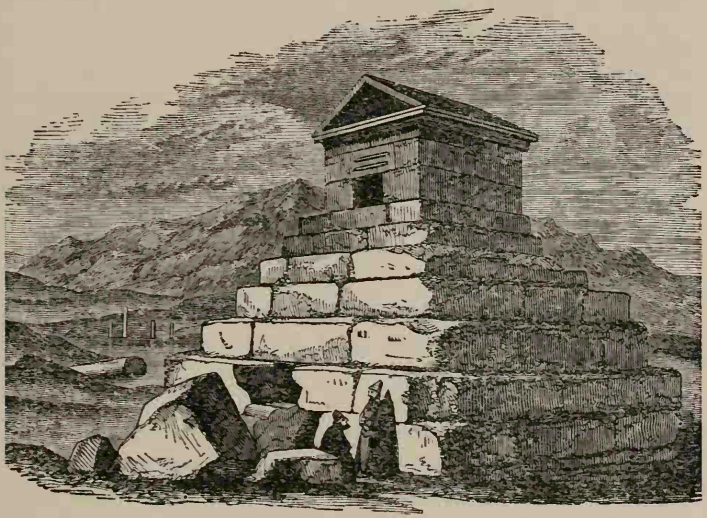
For, indeed, according to Herodotus, Cyrus fell victim at last to a woman. The queen sent to threatening Cyrus a most reasonable message of expostulation against his warlike aggression; proposing, however, that, were he immovably bent on his aim, they two should agree upon a duel of their armies to be fought with mutual consent as to terms. She submitted an alternative. Cyrus might choose: Either he should march unmolested three days' journey into her domin-

ions and there join battle with her; or, she would make a similar advance into the territory of Cyrus and engage him on his own ground. Cyrus considered, and he had now made up his mind, when Crœsus, who disapproved of the conqueror's decision, intervened with advice as follows:

O, my king! I promised thee long since, that, as Jove had given me into thy hands, I would, to the best of my power, avert impending danger from thy house. Alas! my own sufferings, by their very bitterness, have taught me to be keen-sighted of dangers. If thou deemest thyself an immortal, and thine army an army of immortals, my counsel will doubtless be thrown away upon thee. But if thou feelest thyself to be a man, and a ruler of men, lay this first to heart, that there is a wheel on which the affairs of men revolve, and that its movement forbids the same man to be always fortunate. Now concerning the matter in hand, my judgment runs counter to the judgment of thy other counselors. For if thou agreest to give the enemy entrance into thy country, consider what risk is run! Lose the battle, and therewith thy whole kingdom is lost. For assuredly, the Massagetæ, if they win the fight, will not return to their homes, but will push forward against the states of thy empire. Or if thou gainest the battle, why, then thou gainest far less than if thou wert across the stream, where thou mightest follow up thy victory. For against thy loss, if they defeat thee on thy own ground, must be set theirs in like case. Rout their army on the other side of the river, and thou mayest push at once into the heart of their country. Moreover, were it not disgrace intolerable for Cyrus, the son of Cam-by'ses, to retire before and yield ground to a woman? My counsel therefore is, that we cross the stream, and, pushing forward as far as they shall fall back, then seek to get the better of them by stratagem. I am told they are unacquainted with the good things on which the Persians live, and have never tasted the great delights of life. Let us, then, prepare a feast for them in our camp; let sheep be slaughtered without stint, and the wine-cups be filled full of noble liquor, and let all manner of dishes be prepared; then leaving behind us our worst troops, let us fall back toward the river. Unless I very much mistake, when they see the good fare set out, they will forget all else and fall to. Then it will remain for us to do our part manfully.

Cyrus reconsidered and adopted the counsel of Crœsus. Crœsus, however, he did not take with him in the advance. Instead of this, handing his royal captive-guest over to his

son and successor, Cam-by'ses, with strict charge to the youth to treat the Lydian monarch kindly, even should the expedition issue unfavorably, he sent them both back to Persia. The event was partly as Crœsus had forecast. A son of Tomyris, leading a third part of her army, came up, fell on Cyrus's guard left behind, and put them to the sword. Cyrus returned to find them gorged with feast, and asleep. He slew and captured at his will. Among the prisoners was the son himself of Tomyris. The queen sent Cyrus word, 'Restore my son and go unscathed. Refuse, and I swear to thee, bloodthirsty as thou art, I will give thee thy fill of blood.' Poor Spar-gap'i-thes, the son, recovered from his debauch, at once felt the extent of his misfortune. Getting himself released from his fetters, he put an end to his own life. Battle afterward resulted in the discomfiture of Cyrus. The conqueror himself was slain; but vengeful Tomyris had her satisfaction of his corpse. She plunged the severed head



SUPPOSED TOMB OF CYRUS.

into a skin filled with human blood, exclaiming, 'I make good my threat and give thee thy glut of gore.'

Following, thus far, with some discursions, the fortunes of Crœsus, we have now reached the end of the first book of Herodotus. Cambyses, (conjectured by some to be the Ahasuerus of the Old Testament,) succeeding to the Persian throne, takes up his father's unfinished career of conquest, in various enterprises to which Herodotus does not even allude. The first enterprise of his that our historian mentions is his invading of Egypt. With that mention for preface, Herodotus devotes his second book entire to an account of Egypt, the land and the people. The notes and essays that accompany, in Mr. Rawlinson's volumes, are full of learned interest. We skip to the third book, in which the history proper is resumed, and in which our hero Crœsus re-appears. The mad pranks of absolute power that Cambyses played at the cost of the conquered Egyptians, Herodotus relates in a considerable number of instances. Cambyses, the historian thinks, must have been out of his right mind. Out of his right mind indeed he probably was; but whether otherwise so than as the wine of boundless irresponsible sway tends to make any man drinking it to be, may be doubted. The despot's wild humors took incalculable aims. The Egyptians were not the only ones to suffer. His near kindred felt the tyrant's fiercely frolicsome power—his own chosen favorites too as well. Let one example suffice. Herodotus says:

> He was mad also upon others besides his kindred; among the rest, upon Prex-as'pes, the man whom he esteemed beyond all the rest of the Persians, who carried his messages, and whose son held the office—an honor of no small account in Persia—of his cup-bearer. Him Cambyses is said to have once addressed as follows: "What sort of man, Prexaspes, do the Persians think me? What do they say of me?" Prexaspes answered, "O sire, they praise thee greatly in all things but one—they say thou art too much given to love of wine." Such Prexaspes told him was the judgment of the Persians; whereupon Cambyses,

full of rage, made answer, "What? they say now that I drink too much wine, and so have lost my senses, and am gone out of my mind! Then their former speeches about me were untrue." For once, when the Persians were sitting with him, and Crœsus was by, he had asked them, "What sort of man they thought him compared to his father Cyrus?" Hereon they had answered, that he surpassed his father, for he was lord over all that his father ever ruled, and further had made himself master of Egypt, and the sea. Then Crœsus, who was standing near, and misliked the comparison, spoke thus to Cambyses: "In my judgment, O son of Cyrus, thou art not equal to thy father, for thou hast not yet left behind thee such a son as he." Cambyses was delighted when he heard this reply, and praised the judgment of Crœsus.

Recollecting these answers, Cambyses spoke fiercely to Prexaspes, saying, "Judge now thyself, Prexaspes, whether the Persians tell the truth, or whether it is not they who are mad for speaking as they do. Look there now at thy son standing in the vestibule. If I shoot and hit him right in the middle of the heart, it will be plain the Persians have no grounds for what they say. If I miss him, then I allow that the Persians are right, and that I am out of my mind." So speaking, he drew his bow to the full, and struck the boy, who straightway fell down dead. Then Cambyses ordered the body to be opened, and the wound examined; and when the arrow was found to have entered the heart, the king was quite overjoyed, and said to the father with a laugh, "Now thou seest plainly, Prexaspes, that it is not I who am mad, but the Persians who have lost their senses. I pray thee tell me, sawest thou ever mortal man send an arrow with a better aim?" Prexaspes, seeing that the king was not in his right mind, and fearing for himself, replied, "O my lord, I do not think that God himself could shoot so dexterously." Such was the outrage which Cambyses committed at this time: at another he took twelve of the noblest Persians, and, without bringing any charge worthy of death against them, buried them all up to the neck.

We cannot forbear here inserting a note, subjoined by the translator to the last sentence of the extract preceding:

"This mode of punishment is still in use at the present day, and goes by the name of 'Tree-planting.' Feti-Ali-Shah once sent for Astra-chan, one of his courtiers, and with an appearance of great friendliness took him round his garden, showing him all its beauties. When he had finished the circuit, he appealed to Astra-chan to know what his

garden still lacked? 'Nothing,' said the courtier; 'it is quite perfect.' 'I think differently,' replied the king; 'I must decidedly plant a tree in it.' Astra-chan, who knew the king's meaning only too well, fell at his feet, and begged his life; which he obtained at the price of surrendering to the king the lady to whom he was betrothed."

Crœsus ventured now on the hazardous part of "guide, philosopher, and friend" to Cambyses. Herodotus reports his admonition, with its sequel, as follows:

"O king, allow not thyself to give way entirely to thy youth, and the heat of thy temper, but check and control thyself. It is well to look to consequences, and in forethought is true wisdom. Thou layest hold of men, who are thy fellow-citizens, and without cause of complaint slayest them; thou even puttest children to death; bethink thee now, if thou shalt often do things like these, will not the Persians rise in revolt against thee? It is by thy father's wish that I offer thee advice; he charged me strictly to give thee such counsel as I might see to be most for thy good." In thus advising Cambyses, Crœsus meant nothing but what was friendly. But Cambyses answered him, "Dost thou presume to offer me advice? Right well thou ruledst thy own country when thou wast a king, and right sage advice thou gavest my father, Cyrus, bidding him cross the Araxes and fight the Massagetæ in their own land, when they were willing to have passed over into ours. By thy misdirection of thine own affairs thou broughtest ruin upon thyself, and by thy bad counsel, which he followed, thou broughtest ruin upon Cyrus, my father. But thou shalt not escape punishment now, for I have long been seeking to find some occasion against thee." As he thus spoke, Cambyses took up his bow to shoot at Crœsus; but Crœsus ran hastily out, and escaped. So when Cambyses found that he could not kill him with his bow, he bade his servants seize him, and put him to death. The servants, however, who knew their master's humor, thought it best to hide Crœsus; that so, if Cambyses relented, and asked for him, they might bring him out, and get a reward for having saved his life; if, on the other hand, he did not relent, or regret the loss, they might then dispatch him. Not long afterward Cambyses did in fact regret the loss of Crœsus, and the servants, perceiving it, let him know that he was still alive. "I am glad," said he, "that Crœsus lives, but as for you who saved him, ye shall not escape my vengeance, but shall all of you be put to death." And he did even as he had said.

Herodotus everywhere shows his pious turn of mind. He is apparently disposed to account for the mental disorders under which he thinks Cambyses undoubtedly suffered, by regarding them as a punishment inflicted on the tyrant for his acts of impiety toward the Egyptian gods. This explanatory suggestion, however, Herodotus—who knows but humorously?—accompanies with a wisely wide alternative: The insanity of Cambyses arose, "either," he says, "from his usage of Apis, or from some other among the many causes from which calamities are wont to arise."

With the foregoing paternal admonition delivered to Cambyses, Crœsus disappears from the history of Herodotus. The historian—romancer, were it better in this connection to call him?—forgets to give us any notice of the Lydian's end.

Crœsus was no doubt a real personage, the outlines of whose history we may trust to have been truly supplied by Herodotus. But the details, it is likely, are in large part a gradual accretion of myth. During successive generations, the fancy of the ancients had Crœsus for a favorite figure on which to exercise itself. That fancy never tired of adorning his legend either with new figments or new pigments of romance. The form in which the legend descends to us from the hands of Herodotus is by no means the one most elaborately decorated. But that form has been selected by the consent of mankind as the one worthiest to be immortal. Crœsus, as we have already remarked, was to our author a capital illustration of his chosen philosophy of human life. Great good fortune followed by ill fortune as great, made a spectacle that had irresistible fascination for Herodotus. We go on now to another of his illustrious historic examples, in Xerxes, crossing thus an interval of about fifty years. Cambyses died 522 B. C. Xerxes began to reign 485 B. C.

The invasion of Greece by Xerxes is a feature of ancient story that every one knows of almost immemorial knowledge. We shall not repeat it here out of Herodotus. How Xerxes

spent years in preparation, how he got together an armament on land and on sea exceeding, in number of men and in amount of warlike equipment, any thing before or since known, how, his heart distended with pride, he sat to behold his vast array, how he scourged the strait that in storm broke up his bridge, how, at length, checked at Thermopylæ, defeated at Salamis, he was forced to withdraw, his main object unaccomplished—all this is a tale that the world has by heart. Our plan will be to select, from the full store supplied by Herodotus, a few salient anecdotes of the war and set these before our readers. We shall aim to make our selection serve not only to show the matter and method of Herodotus, but to illustrate the characters of two men in particular, brought into the strong light of mutual contrast by the struggle. They will be two men who may justly be taken to represent respectively the two races to which respectively they belong. We mean Xerxes for the Persians, and The-mis'to-cles for the Greeks.

Here, to begin with, is a recital luridly exhibiting the violent contrast of gracious with vindictive, that may exist in one human breast, nay, that perhaps is naturally engendered in any human breast born to the immeasurable misfortune of the possession of arbitrary power. Xerxes, with his host numbering already more than a million of men, is at Ce-læ'-næ in Phrygia. Herodotus:

> Now there lived in this city a certain Pyth'ius, the son of A'tys, a Lydian. This man entertained Xerxes and his whole army in a most magnificent fashion, offering at the same time to give him a sum of money for the war. Xerxes, upon the mention of money, turned to the Persians who stood by, and asked of them, "Who is this Pythius, and what wealth has he that he should venture on such an offer as this?" They answered him, "This is the man, O king, who gave thy father, Darius, the golden plane-tree, and likewise the golden vine; and he is still the wealthiest man we know of in all the world, excepting thee."
>
> Xerxes marveled at these last words, and now addressing Pythius

with his own lips, he asked him, what the amount of his wealth really was. Pythius answered as follows:

"O king, I will not hide this matter from thee, nor make pretense that I do not know how rich I am; but as I know perfectly, I will declare all fully before thee. For when thy journey was noised abroad, and I heard thou wert coming down to the Grecian coast, straightway, as I wished to give thee a sum of money for the war, I made count of my stores, and found them to be two thousand talents of silver, and of gold four millions of Daric staters, wanting seven thousand. All this I willingly make over to thee as a gift; and when it is gone, my slaves and my estates in land will be wealth enough for my wants."

This speech charmed Xerxes and he replied: "Dear Lydian, since I left Persia, there is no man but thou who has either desired to entertain my army, or come forward of his own free will to offer me a sum of money for the war. Thou hast done both the one and the other, feasting my troops magnificently, and now making offer of a right noble sum. In return, this is what I will bestow on thee. Thou shalt be my sworn friend from this day; and the seven thousand staters which are wanting to make up thy four millions I will supply, so that the full tale may be no longer lacking, and that thou mayest owe the completion of the round sum to me. Continue to enjoy all that thou hast acquired hitherto, and be sure to remain ever such as thou now art. If thou dost, thou wilt not repent of it so long as thy life endures."

When Xerxes had so spoken and had made good his promises to Pythius, he pressed forward upon his march.

So much for the bountiful grace of the king. Thus far the story reads almost as if it might have been told—this parallel often recurs to mind—of Louis XIV. of France. But there is a sequel. After various fortune experienced in the matter of preparing to cross the Hellespont, the army at length was about to move, when an eclipse of the sun occurred—so Herodotus relates; but the astronomers say that Herodotus is wrong, that no such eclipse occurred that year. However this may be, here is the other side of Pythius's relation to Xerxes. Herodotus says:

The army had begun its march, when Pythius, the Lydian, affrighted at the heavenly portent, and emboldened by his gifts, came to Xerxes and said, "Grant me, O my lord, a favor which is to thee a light matter, but to me of vast account." Then Xerxes, who looked for

nothing less than such a prayer as Pythius in fact preferred, engaged to grant him whatever he wished, and commanded him to tell his wish freely. So Pythius, full of boldness, went on to say:

"O my lord, thy servant has five sons, and it chances that all are called upon to join thee in this march against Greece. I beseech thee, have compassion upon my years, and let one of my sons, the eldest, remain behind, to be my prop and stay, and the guardian of my wealth. Take with thee the other four: and when thou hast done all that is in thy heart, mayst thou come back in safety."

But Xerxes was greatly angered, and replied to him: "Thou wretch! darest thou speak to me of thy son, when I am myself on the march against Greece, with sons, and brothers, and kinsfolk, and friends? Thou who art my bond-slave, and art in duty bound to follow me with all thy household, not excepting thy wife! Know that man's spirit dwelleth in his ears, and when it hears good things, straightway it fills all his body with delight; but no sooner does it hear the contrary than it heaves and swells with passion. As when thou didst good deeds and madest good offers to me, thou wert not able to boast of having outdone the king in bountifulness; so now when thou art changed and grown impudent, thou shalt not receive all thy deserts, but less. For thyself and four of thy five sons, the entertainment which I had of thee shall gain protection; but as for him to whom thou clingest above the rest, the forfeit of his life shall be thy punishment." Having thus spoken, forthwith he commanded those to whom such tasks were assigned, to seek out the eldest of the sons of Pythius, and having cut his body asunder, to place the two halves, one on the right and the other on the left of the great road, so that the army might march out between them. Then the king's orders were obeyed; and the army marched out between the two halves of the carcase.

Arrived at A-by'dos, Xerxes is struck with a very natural desire. To desire and to be gratified is, for Xerxes, one and the same. Herodotus relates:

Arrived here, Xerxes wished to look upon all his host; so, as there was a throne of white marble upon a hill near the city, which they of Abydos had prepared beforehand, by the king's bidding, for his especial use, Xerxes took his seat on it, and, gazing thence upon the shore below, beheld at one view all his land forces and all his ships. While thus employed he felt a desire to behold a sailing-match among his ships, which accordingly took place, and was won by the Phœnicians of

Sidon, much to the joy of Xerxes, who was delighted alike with the race and with his army.

And now, as he looked and saw the whole Hellespont covered with the vessels of his fleet, and all the shore and every plain about Abydos as full as could be of men, Xerxes congratulated himself on his good fortune; but after a little while he wept.

There was a good uncle of Xerxes in the host, Ar-ta-ba'-nus by name. Artabanus, hearing that his nephew the king was in tears, went to him. The two entered into an exchange of sentiment such as shows how little the human heart, whether in breast of high or of low, changes from generation to generation. The pessimists of our time may recognize the antiquity of their own comfortless view of human life. Herodotus reports Xerxes as speaking, and Artabanus replying, thus:

"There came upon me a sudden pity when I thought of the shortness of man's life, and considered that of all this host, so numerous as it is, not one will be alive when a hundred years are gone by."

"And yet there are sadder things in life than that," returned the other. "Short as our time is, there is no man, whether it be here among this multitude or elsewhere, who is so happy as not to have felt the wish—I will not say once, but full many a time—that he were dead rather than alive. Calamities fall upon us, sicknesses vex and harass us, and make life, short though it be, to appear long. So death, through the wretchedness of our life, is a most sweet refuge to our race; and God, who gives us the tastes that we enjoy of pleasant times, is seen, in his very gift, to be envious."

With much still before us in the text that almost irresistibly entices, we here stay our hand from what might further illustrate the character of Xerxes. Go we now, shutting our else too-much-persuaded eyes, and hardening our hearts, forward through these bewitching fields of anecdotal bloom, to the name of Themistocles. Every body knows the shifty, irrepressible, audacious, unscrupulous genius of this Greek of the Greeks. Every body knows how necessary a part he played in the great drama of the Greek repulse of the Per-

sians. We simply now give some anecdotes of the man, in the fresh, fragrant text of Herodotus—composition immortally renewed in its charm, and like

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn.

The Greek allied fleet were on the point of withdrawing before the Persians and leaving the Eubœans exposed to destruction. With Eu-ry-bi'a-des, Lacedæmonian commander-in-chief, the Eubœans in suppliance prevailing nothing, they went to a man more open to negotiations. Now Herodotus:

THEMISTOCLES.

> They went to Themistocles, the Athenian commander, to whom they gave a bribe of thirty talents, on his promise that the fleet should remain and risk a battle in defense of Eubœa.
>
> And Themistocles succeeded in detaining the fleet in the way which I will now relate. He made over to Eurybiades five talents out of the thirty paid him, which he gave as if they came from himself: and having in this way gained over the admiral, he addressed himself to Adeimantus, the son of Ocyus, the Corinthian leader, who was the only remonstrant now, and who still threatened to sail away from Artemisium and not wait for the other captains. Addressing himself to this man, Themistocles said with an oath, "Thou forsake us? By no means! I will pay thee better for remaining than the Mede would for leaving thy friends"—and straightway he sent on board the ship of Adeimantus a present of three talents of silver. So these two captains were won by gifts, and came over to the views of Themistocles, who was thereby enabled to gratify the wishes of the Eubœans. He likewise made his own gain on the occasion; for he kept the rest of the money, and no one knew of it. The commanders who took the gifts thought that the sums were furnished by Athens, and had been sent to be used in this way.
>
> Thus it came to pass that the Greeks stayed at Eubœa and there gave battle to the enemy.

Here is the device of Themistocles for detaching the subject Ionian Greeks from the interest of Xerxes. It reads like a larger contrivance of O-dys'seus. In truth Themistocles might be a study in real life from the Odysseus of Homer's romance. Herodotus:

> Themistocles chose out the swiftest sailers from among the Athenian vessels, and, proceeding to the various watering-places along the coast, cut inscriptions on the rocks, which were read by the Ionians the day following, on their arrival at Artemisium. The inscriptions ran thus: "Men of Ionia, ye do wrong to fight against your own fathers and to give your help to enslave Greece. We beseech you, therefore, to come over, if possible, to our side: if you cannot do this, then, we pray you, stand aloof from the contest yourselves, and persuade the Carians to do the like. If neither of these things be possible, and you are hindered, by a force too strong to resist, from venturing upon desertion, at least when we come to blows, fight backwardly, remembering that you are sprung from us, and that it was through you we first provoked the hatred of the barbarians." Themistocles, in putting up these inscriptions, looked, I believe, to two chances—either Xerxes would not discover them, in which case they might bring over the Ionians to the side of the Greeks; or they would be reported to him and made a ground of accusation against the Ionians, who would thereupon be distrusted, and would not be allowed to take part in the sea-fights.

When the time came for finally deciding where the Grecian fleet should make its stand against the Persians, Themistocles took infinite trouble to secure a vote in favor of Salamis. Finding, to his disgust, that the majority at last were going against him, he took a bold step. Let Herodotus tell what it was:

> He went out secretly from the council, and instructing a certain man what he should say, sent him on board a merchant ship to the fleet of the Medes. The man's name was Sicinnus; he was one of Themistocles' household slaves, and acted as tutor to his sons; in after times, when the Thespians were admitting persons to citizenship, Themistocles made him a Thespian, and a rich man to boot. The ship brought Sicinnus to the Persian fleet, and there he delivered his message to the leaders in these words: "The Athenian commander has sent me to you privily, without the knowledge of the other Greeks. He is a well-

wisher to the king's cause, and would rather success should attend on you than on his countrymen ; wherefore he bids me tell you, that fear has seized the Greeks and they are meditating a hasty flight. Now then it is open to you to achieve the best work that ever ye wrought, if only ye will hinder their escaping. They no longer agree among themselves, so that they will not now make any resistance—nay, 'tis likely ye may see a fight already begun between such as favour and such as oppose your cause." The messenger, when he had thus expressed himself, departed and was seen no more.

The risk assumed by Themistocles was not, we are warranted in supposing, necessarily all of it dictated by patriotic self-sacrifice on his part. It would be quite like Themistocles, in so momentous a crisis of his own personal fortune, to have kept a thrifty eye to alternative chances. Xerxes might win; and if so, Themistocles, by this information sent in advance to the conqueror, would establish a claim to favorable consideration from the sovereign of the world. There was no bottom to the abyss of the sagacity of Themistocles—of his sagacity, and, if Herodotus is to be trusted, we might almost add of his unscrupulousness too. Herodotus says that, later, when after the Persian defeat there was talk of the Athenians' sailing to the Hellespont and there breaking the bridges by which Xerxes would retreat, he dissuaded his countrymen from the plan—in the hope of so gaining favor with the Persian king. Herodotus reports as follows a message sent on this subsequent occasion by Themistocles to Xerxes:

"Themistocles the Athenian, anxious to render thee a service, has restrained the Greeks, who were impatient to pursue thy ships, and to break up the bridges at the Hellespont. Now, therefore, return home at thy leisure."

With one paragraph more, from these fascinating pages, concerning Themistocles, we bring our presentation of Herodotus abruptly to a close. Themistocles himself, however, is not to disappear from our view along with Herodotus.

He will come before us again for a little in our next chapter, that entitled "Thucydides."

The greed of Themistocles was as great as his genius. Commencing his shameless levies with the Andrians, he used his power to enforce a general scheme of spoliation for his own aggrandizement on the exposed and helpless isles of Greece. It is melancholy that Herodotus should be, as probably he was, justified in the heavy indictment brought against this great representative Greek in the following words:

> Meanwhile Themistocles, who never ceased his pursuit of gain, sent threatening messages to the other islanders with demands for different sums, employing the same messengers and the same words as he had used toward the Andrians. "If," he said, "they did not send him the amount required, he would bring the Greek fleet upon them, and besiege them till he took their cities." By these means he collected large sums from the Carystians and the Parians, who, when they heard that Andros was already besieged, and that Themistocles was the best esteemed of all the captains, sent the money through fear. Whether any of the other islanders did the like, I cannot say for certain; but I think some did besides those I have mentioned. However, the Carystians, though they complied, were not spared any the more; but Themistocles was softened by the Parians' gift, and therefore they received no visit from the army. In this way it was Themistocles, during his stay at Andros, obtained money from the islanders, unbeknown to the other captains.

If now the foregoing presentation of this historical work shall have made on our readers the impression of a very discursive writer in Herodotus, we can only say that such impression is quite in accordance with fact. If, however, the impression shall also have been made that Herodotus worked on no plan and that he gave no unity to his composition, that impression is very wide of the truth. Digressions there undoubtedly are—and some digressions that might, perhaps, better have been spared—but from every digression there is always return to the main road, the great highway, of design that stretches

from goal to goal of this well-conceived and well-executed history.

Herodotus was, like nearly every writer of the first class in every literature, a man of comparatively high moral tone. Comparatively, we say, and this qualification is necessary. For there are stories told by Herodotus which it would not do for us to repeat in these pages. But the fault in taste and in ethical standard is the fault, not of the man, but of his age and of heathenism. The total effect of the history—and this is the individual praise of Herodotus—makes for, rather than against, good morals. The fluent garrulity of the historian, his evident willingness to gratify popular appetite, perhaps we should say, rather, his own frankly genuine sympathy with popular appetite, make his pages a marvelously perfect mirror to reflect for all generations the features and the lineaments of the age and the race to which he belonged. The literary image thus immortally preserved we prize and prize highly; but as for the original of the image, the reality itself, that did not perish too soon.

III.

THUCYDIDES.

THUCYDIDES is not so entertaining an historian as Herodotus. This is due partly to the nature of his subject; but partly it is due to the nature of the man. Indeed, since it was mainly the nature of the man that prescribed his choice of a subject, it may fairly be said that the difference, existing against Thucydides as compared with Herodotus, in point of entertainingness, is chiefly attributable to the less engaging personal quality of the author himself.

What Thucydides describes is the so-called Pel-o-pon-ne'-sian war. This is the name given to a conflict, continued

with little interruption during twenty-seven years, between Sparta (chief Peloponnesian power) with her allies, on the one side, and Athens with her allies, on the other. The conflict was confined almost exclusively to the states and colonies of Greece. It partook strongly of the character of a civil war. The prize contended for was leadership in Hellenic affairs. Sparta envied Athens her empire. Or, to put the matter from the other point of view, Athens threatened the independence of Sparta and of Hellas. The result of this mutual jealousy was that, continuously, for the space of almost a whole human generation, the states of Greece devoted themselves energetically to the business of destroying one another. Energetically, but not exclusively; for Athens, meantime—and this is one of the miracles of history—warring, as it were, with her left hand, carried forward, with her right, those matchless achievements of hers, in letters and in arts, which have made her name the immortal synonym and symbol of genius, of culture, and of taste. It is beyond measure astonishing that, embroiled in internecine war at home, embarked in arduous naval expeditions abroad, suffering, almost to decimation, within her own city walls from a plague unsurpassed for virulence, this incomparably spirited little municipality, probably not at her height of prosperity numbering more than about twenty thousand free citizens, (representing a total population of, say, five hundred thousand souls,) should, at this very same moment of her history, have been living a life of the intellect flowering into such products as Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Thucydides.

THUCYDIDES.

For Thucydides wrote of his own times in his history. Of

his own times, but, alas! of his own times, in only one aspect of those times, the aspect of war. Immensely is this to be regretted. No account whatever, scarcely even a hint, from that master hand, of the double life that Athens lived during all those troubled days! You would scarcely guess from Thucydides, that, besides her remarkable activity in war, Athens was maintaining meantime a parallel activity more remarkable still that was not of war, in the production of such works in literature and in art as, generally and justly, are assumed to be sufficiently described when they are simply described as works of peace. The masterpieces of poetry, of sculpture, and of architecture, which were the fruit of those years—what enhanced interest they acquire in your eyes when you remember that Athens achieved them during the protracted agony of a war destined to issue in disaster to herself almost equivalent to her own destruction! Conceive the pleasure with which, amid the annals of battle or of plague, we should have read, in the assured and graphic delineation of Thucydides, episodes of information about the literary and artistic life of Athens—episodes decorated, as *he* could have decorated them, with illustrious contemporary names! How such diversifications would have relieved and illuminated the sombre monotony of his history!

But Thucydides did not know that he was writing also for us —perhaps, had he known, would not have cared for our wishes. He was intensely and narrowly Greek. There was for him no world outside of Hellas. The Ionian birth and breeding, perhaps it was, of Herodotus, that gave this different genius a more cosmopolitan breadth of sympathy than belonged to Thucydides. Thucydides thought that never in the world had there been a war so great as promised in its imminency to be the Peloponnesian war. At the very outset, therefore, of the struggle he began to take notes in preparation for his history. One is glad that Thucydides estimated, as he did, the magnitude of his theme, since otherwise it seems likely

we should not have had the present work. But the actual fact is that there has rarely a war occurred and been made the subject of serious historical report, that to the world at large was of less moment than the Peloponnesian war. Simply a quarrel in the Hellenic family, it was costly, disgraceful, disastrous—to them—but to mankind in general of scarcely the smallest direct concern. The history of Thucydides accordingly is not important as history; but, first, as literature, and, secondly, as fund of illustration for the Greek national genius, it is of the very highest importance. The work being in its character such as has now been indicated, evidently we are released from any necessity of giving a conscientious abstract and condensation in full of its contents. It is composed in the form of annals, that is, the events and incidents are related chronologically by years. It is incomplete, ending abruptly in the middle of the twenty-first year of the war.

Of the author himself, beyond such scant autobiographical notices as the history itself contains, little is known. "Thucydides an Athenian," is his own description of himself. When he became an Athenian, that is, when he was born, no one can positively say. The date given on doubtful authority is 471 B. C. This must be pretty near the mark, for the historian tells us that he was of mature age when the war commenced, and that was 431 B. C. The writer was himself an actor in the affairs of which he wrote; but the part he performed was not prosperous, and it seems that, according to a way the Athenians had, he was banished for his miscarriage in generalship. Twenty years of exile gave him an opportunity to look at matters with a strong parallax, that is, from the Peloponnesian, in place of the Athenian, point of view. During this long absence of Thucydides from his native city, a sharp change in literary style and taste took place at Athens, nothing less than the transition from the Old Attic, so-called, to the New. This mutation in mode Thu-

cydides did not share. He remains the great representative in prose, as is Æschylus in verse, of the old Attic literature. There seems a certain fitness between his own personal character as displayed in his writings, and the austere diction and syntax in which Thucydides wrote. Ellipsis, lack of strict grammatical concord, archaic idiom, sententiousness, not infrequent obscurity, are marks of his style. These traits almost disappear—they disappear certainly as far as they should—in the magically perfect translation of Mr. Jowett, a translation, we doubt not, as near to ideal in fidelity and in felicity, as exists of any work in any language. Let us begin at once with Thucydides in Mr. Jowett's translation :

> Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war in which the Peloponnesians and the Athenians fought against one another. He began to write when they first took up arms, believing that it would be great and memorable above any previous war. For he argued that both states were then at the full height of their military power, and he saw the rest of the Hellenes either siding or intending to side with one or other of them. No movement ever stirred Hellas more deeply than this ; it was shared by many of the Barbarians, and might be said even to affect the world at large.

The foregoing is the way in which Thucydides commences his history. The effect upon "the world at large" was limited to the exciting of a disposition in the Persians to participate by intrigue or by alliance in the conflict, with a view on their part to ultimate incorporating of Hellas in their empire.

What immediately follows the sentence quoted above has been thought by some to be a slant at Herodotus. Let our readers judge for themselves. Here it is :

> The character of the events which preceded, whether immediately or in more remote antiquity, owing to the lapse of time cannot be made out with certainty. But, judging from the evidence which I am able to trust after most careful inquiry, I should imagine that former ages were not great, either in their wars or in any thing else.

If Thucydides indeed meant this for an anonymous disparagement of Herodotus, let us forget it of him. I am afraid we should not otherwise successfully forgive him for it.

After some dull pages of learned disquisition on antiquities, in which the historian turns critic, and almost cynical critic at that, on the credulity of his countrymen in general, he says once more something that is capable of being understood to be a fling at Herodotus. The reader is warned by Thucydides not to be "misled" by the tales of chroniclers that seek to please the ear rather than to speak the truth. The chief passage in which our author sets forth his own method of historical composition is too important to be omitted. We give it:

> As to the speeches which were made either before or during the war, it was hard for me, and for others who reported them to me, to recollect the exact words. I have, therefore, put into the mouth of each speaker the sentiments proper to the occasion, expressed as I thought he would be likely to express them, while at the same time I endeavored, as nearly as I could, to give the general purport of what was actually said. Of the events of the war I have not ventured to speak from any chance information, nor according to any notion of my own; I have described nothing but what I either saw myself, or learned from others of whom I made the most careful and particular inquiry. The task was a laborious one, because eye-witnesses of the same occurrences gave different accounts of them, as they remembered or were interested in the actions of one side or the other. And very likely the strictly historical character of my narrative may be disappointing to the ear. But if he who desires to have before his eyes a true picture of the events which have happened, and of the like events which may be expected to happen hereafter in the order of human things, shall pronounce what I have written to be useful, then I shall be satisfied. My history is an everlasting possession, not a prize composition which is heard and forgotten.

The statement of the causes, or rather the occasions, that led to the Peloponnesian war we may pass over. "The real though unavowed cause," says Thucydides, "I believe to have been the growth of the Athenian power, which terrified the Lacedæmonians and forced them into the war."

The account, too, given by Thucydides of the course of policy through which Athens grew menacingly great, we will omit, except as it contains mention of a certain personage in whom we may with confidence suppose our readers to have become much interested out of Herodotus. This personage is no other than that typical Greek, Themistocles. In telling us of him, Thucydides, without expressly saying so, makes his history meet and continue the history of Herodotus.

We simply remind our readers that the close of the Persian war indeed left Xerxes in disastrous retreat, but it also left Athens in ruins. The Lacedæmonians sent word to the Athenians not to rebuild their city walls. For this advice they pleaded certain specious reasons; but their real motive, Thucydides says, was jealousy of Athens. Now comes in that man of many wiles, Themistocles. Let Thucydides speak:

> To this [the Lacedæmonian suggestion about the city walls] the Athenians, by the advice of Themistocles, replied, that they would send an embassy of their own to discuss the matter, and so got rid of the Spartan envoys. He then proposed that he should himself start at once for Sparta, and that they should give him colleagues who were not to go immediately, but were to wait until the wall reached the lowest height which could possibly be defended. The whole people, men, women, and children, should join in the work, and they must spare no building, private or public, which could be of use, but demolish them all. Having given these instructions and intimated that he would manage affairs at Sparta, he departed. On his arrival he did not at once present himself officially to the magistrates, but delayed and made excuses; and when any of them asked him "why he did not appear before the assembly," he said "that he was waiting for his colleagues, who had been detained by some engagement, he was daily expecting them, and wondered that they had not appeared."
>
> The friendship of the Lacedæmonian magistrates for Themistocles induced them to believe him; but when every body who came from Athens declared positively that the wall was building and had already reached a considerable height, they knew not what to think. He, aware of their suspicions, desired them not to be misled by reports, but to send to Athens men whom they could trust out of their own number

who would see for themselves and bring back word. They agreed; and he at the same time privately instructed the Athenians to detain the envoys as quietly as they could, and not let them go until he and his colleagues had got safely home. For by this time Ha-bron′i-chus, the son of Lys′i-cles, and Ar-is-ti′des, the son of Ly-sim′a-chus, who were joined with him in the embassy, had arrived, bringing the news that the wall was of sufficient height; and he was afraid that the Lacedæmonians, when they heard the truth, might not allow them to return. So the Athenians detained the envoys, and Themistocles, coming before the Lacedæmonians, at length declared in so many words that Athens was now provided with walls and could protect her citizens; henceforward, if the Lacedæmonians or their allies wished at any time to negotiate, they must deal with the Athenians as with men who knew quite well what was for their own and the common good. When they boldly resolved to leave their city and go on board ship, they did not first ask the advice of the Lacedæmonians, and, when the two states met in council, their own judgment had been as good as that of any one. And now they had arrived at an independent opinion that it was better far, and would be more advantageous, both for themselves and for the whole body of the allies, that their city should have a wall; when any member of a confederacy had not equal military advantages, his counsel could not be of equal weight or worth. Either all the allies should pull down their walls, or they should acknowledge that the Athenians were in the right.

Themistocles was something besides a consummate trickster; he was a far-seeing statesman. He it was who conceived for Athens the idea which afterward, embraced and carried to its complete realization by Pericles, made that city during a brief and splendid culmination of her power, if not quite mistress of Hellas, at least undisputed leader in Hellenic affairs. Here is the passage in which Thucydides describes the policy forecast by Themistocles. (We need but direct our readers' attention to the fact that Athens, situated some four or five miles inland from the sea, had her harbor —or rather her harbors, for there were three of them—on a peninsula called the Pi-ræ′us :)

Themistocles also persuaded the Athenians to finish the Piræus, of which he had made a beginning in his year of office as Archon. The situation of the place, which had three natural havens, was excellent;

and, now that the Athenians had become sailors, he thought that a good harbor would greatly contribute to the extension of their power. For he first dared to say that "they must make the sea their domain," and he lost no time in laying the foundations of their empire. By his advice they built the wall of such a width that two wagons carrying the stones could meet and pass on the top; this width may still be traced at the Piræus; inside there was no rubble or mortar, but the whole wall was made up of large stones hewn square, which were clamped on the outer face with iron and lead. The height was not more than half what he had originally intended; he had hoped by the very dimensions of the wall to paralyze the designs of an enemy, and he thought that a handful of the least efficient citizens would suffice for its defense, while the rest might man the fleet. His mind was turned in this direction, as I conceive, from observing that the Persians had met with fewer obstacles by sea than by land. The Piræus appeared to him to be of more real consequence than the upper city. He was fond of telling the Athenians that if they were hard pressed they should go down to the Piræus and fight the world at sea.

Thus the Athenians built their walls and restored their city immediately after the retreat of the Persians.

We exercise great self-restraint in omitting a very interesting episode of allusion to Pau-sa'ni-as, the Spartan king, who made himself famous fighting against Xerxes, and then made himself infamous intriguing with Artaxerxes, Xerxes' successor. Themistocles, too, tarnished his glory with treason at last. With the story of this, and of the inexhaustible resources which Themistocles displayed in avoiding the consequences of his exposure and in pushing his fortunes in Persia, we dismiss this brilliant but unscrupulous Greek from our view. Thucydides says:

Now the evidence which proved that Pausanias was in league with Persia implicated Themistocles; and the Lacedæmonians sent ambassadors to the Athenians charging him likewise with treason, and demanding that he should receive the same punishment. The Athenians agreed, but having been ostracised he was living at the time in Argos, whence he used to visit other parts of the Peloponnese. The Lacedæmonians were very ready to join in the pursuit; so they and the Athenians sent officers who were told to arrest him wherever they should find him.

Themistocles received information of their purpose, and fled from the Peloponnesus to the Cor-cy-ræ'ans, who were under an obligation to him. The Corcyræans said that they were afraid to keep him, lest they should incur the emnity of Athens and Lacedæmon ; so they conveyed him to the neighboring continent, whither he was followed by the officers, who constantly inquired in which direction he had gone and pursued him everywhere. Owing to an accident, he was compelled to stop at the house of Ad-me'tus, king of the Molossians, who was not his friend. He chanced to be absent from home, but Themistocles presented himself as a suppliant to his wife, and was instructed by her to take their child and sit at the hearth. Admetus soon returned, and then Themistocles told him who he was, adding, that if in past times he had opposed any request which Admetus had made to the Athenians, he ought not to retaliate on an exile. He was now in such extremity that a far weaker adversary than he could do him a mischief, but a noble nature should not be revenged by taking at a disadvantage one so good as himself. Themistocles further argued that he had opposed Admetus in some matter of business, and not when life was at stake ; but that, if Admetus delivered him up, he would be consigning him to death. At the same time he told him who his pursuers were and what was the charge against him.

Admetus, hearing his words, raised him up, together with his own son, from the place where he sat holding the child in his arms, which was the most solemn form of supplication. Not long afterward the Athenians and Lacedæmonians came and pressed him to give up the fugitive, but he refused ; and as Themistocles wanted to go to the King [of Persia], sent him on foot across the country to the sea at Pydna (which was in the kingdom of Alexander.) There he found a merchant vessel sailing to Ionia, in which he embarked ; it was driven, however, by a storm to the station of the Athenian fleet which was blockading Naxos. He was unknown to his fellow-passengers, but, fearing what might happen, he told the captain who he was and why he fled, threatening, if he did not save his life, to say that he had been bribed to take him on board. The only hope was that no one should be allowed to leave the ship while they had to remain off Naxos ; if he complied with his request, the obligation should be abundantly repaid. The captain agreed, and, after anchoring in a rough sea for a day and a night off the Athenian station, he at length arrived at Ephesus. Themistocles rewarded him with a liberal present ; for he received soon afterward from his friends the property which he had deposited at Athens and Argos. He then went up the country with one of the Persians who dwelt on the

coast, and sent a letter to Artaxerxes, the son of Xerxes, who had just succeeded to the throne. The letter was in the following words: "I, Themistocles, have come to you; I who of all Hellenes did your house the greatest injuries, so long as I was compelled to defend myself against your father; but still greater benefits when I was in safety and he in danger during his retreat. And there is a debt of gratitude due to me" (here he noted how he had forewarned Xerxes at Salamis of the resolution of the Hellenes to withdraw, and how through his influence, as he pretended, they had refrained from breaking down the bridges.) "Now I am here, able to do you many other services, and persecuted by the Hellenes for your sake. Let me wait a year, and then I will myself explain why I have come."

The king is said to have been astonished at the boldness of his character, and told him to wait a year as he proposed. In the interval he made himself acquainted, as far as he could, with the Persian language and the manners of the country. When the year was over he arrived at the court and became a greater man there than any Hellene had ever been before. This was due partly to his previous reputation, and partly to the hope which he inspired in the king's mind that he would enslave Hellas to him; above all, his ability had been tried and not found wanting. For Themistocles was a man whose natural force was unmistakable; this was the quality for which he was distinguished above all other men; from his own native acuteness, and without any study, either before or at the time, he was the ablest judge of the course to be pursued in a sudden emergency, and could best divine what was likely to happen in the remotest future. Whatever he had in hand he had the power of explaining to others, and even where he had no experience he was quite competent to form a sufficient judgment; no one could foresee with equal clearness the good or evil event which was hidden in the future. In a word, Themistocles, by natural power of mind and with the least preparation, was of all men the best able to extemporize the right thing to be done. A sickness put an end to his life, although some say that he poisoned himself because he felt that he could not accomplish what he had promised to the king.

Pausanias had an end quite as disgraceful and more tragical far. Mil-ti'a-des, too, the hero of Marathon, whose trophies would not let Themistocles sleep, came to an ill end. In truth, the Greek character seemed not to be able to carry, with sobriety and balance, deep draughts of the wine of success. Of her great men few

were fortunate enough to finish their career without great lapses of weakness.

While Athens had been reviving through the genius of Themistocles, Sparta had been making herself odious through the insolence of Pausanias. Thus Hellas forsook Sparta and came over to Athens. Then, in her turn, Athens became overbearing and unbearable, and the Peloponnesian war broke out. Pericles was in power at the time. We should like, did space permit, to give the speech in favor of war which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Pericles. With a single specimen, however, of that Periclean eloquence which contemporaries praised as Olympian, but which survives only in the free redaction of Thucydides, we shall be forced to make our readers content; and the specimen must be the celebrated oration pronounced by him on the Athenian dead at the close of the first year of the war. To this we proceed at once. The occasion is described and the oration reported by Thucydides as follows: (the dots occurring indicate omissions necessary for economy of space:)

In accordance with an old national custom, the funeral of those who first fell in this war was celebrated by the Athenians at the public charge. The ceremony is as follows: Three days before the celebration they erect a tent in which the bones of the dead are laid out, and every one brings to his own dead any offering which he pleases. At the time of the funeral the bones are placed in chests of cypress wood, which are conveyed on hearses; there is one chest for each tribe. They also carry a single empty litter decked with a pall for all whose bodies are missing and cannot be recovered after the battle. The procession is accompanied by any one who chooses, whether citizen or stranger, and the female relatives of the deceased are present at the place of interment and make lamentation. The public sepulchre is situated in the most beautiful spot outside the walls; there they always bury those who fall in war: only after the battle of Marathon the dead, in recognition of their preeminent valor, were interred on the field. When the remains have been laid in the earth, some man of known ability and high reputation, chosen by the city, delivers a suitable oration over them, after which the people depart. Such is the manner of interment; and the ceremony

was repeated from time to time throughout the war. Over those who were the first buried Pericles was chosen to speak. At the fitting moment he advanced from the sepulchre to a lofty stage, which had been erected in order that he might be heard as far as possible by the multitude, and spoke as follows:

FUNERAL SPEECH.

. . . "Before I praise the dead I should like to point out by what principles of action we rose to power, and under what institutions and through what manner of life our empire became great. For I conceive that such thoughts are not unsuited to the occasion, and that this numerous assembly of citizens and strangers may profitably listen to them.

"Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. [Pericles must be understood as freely slanting at Sparta.] We do not copy our neighbors, but are an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life, and in our private intercourse we are not suspicious of one another, nor angry with our neighbor if he does what he likes; we do not put on sour looks at him which, though harmless, are not pleasant. While we are thus unconstrained in our private intercourse, a spirit of reverence pervades our public acts; we are prevented from doing wrong by respect for authority and for the laws, having an especial regard to those which are ordained for the protection of the injured, as well as to those unwritten laws which bring upon the transgressor of them the reprobation of the general sentiment.

"And we have not forgotten to provide for our weary spirits many relaxations from toil; we have regular games and sacrifices throughout the year; at home the style of our life is refined; and the delight which we daily feel in all these things helps to banish melancholy. Because of the greatness of our city the fruits of the whole earth flow in upon us; so that we enjoy the goods of other countries as freely as of our own.

"Then, again, our military training is in many respects superior to that of our adversaries. Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning any thing of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely

not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face. And here is the proof. The Lacedæmonians come into Attica not by themselves, but with their whole confederacy following; we go alone into a neighbor's country; and although our opponents are fighting for their homes and we on a foreign soil, we have seldom any difficulty in overcoming them. Our enemies have never yet felt our united strength; the care of a navy divides our attention, and on land we are obliged to send our own citizens everywhere. But they, if they meet and defeat a part of our army, are as proud as if they had routed us all, and when defeated they pretend to have been vanquished by us all.

"If, then, we prefer to meet danger with a light heart but without laborious training, and with a courage which is gained by habit and not enforced by law, are we not greatly the gainers? Since we do not anticipate the pain, although, when the hour comes, we can be as brave as those who never allow themselves to rest; and thus, too, our city is equally admirable in peace and in war. For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace: the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act, and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance, but hesitate upon reflection. And they are surely to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense both of the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger. In doing good, again, we are unlike others; we make our friends by conferring, not by receiving favors. Now he who confers a favor is the firmer friend, because he would fain by kindness keep alive the memory of an obligation; but the recipient is colder in his feelings, because he knows that in requiting another's generosity he will not be winning gratitude, but only paying a debt. We alone do good to our neighbors, not upon a calculation of interest,

but in the confidence of freedom and in a frank and fearless spirit. To sum up . I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the individual Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact ; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the state. For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city ; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses ; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and of succeeding ages ; we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other panegyrist whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of the facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valor, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity. Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died ; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them ; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf.

" I have dwelt upon the greatness of Athens because I want to show you that we are contending for a higher prize than those who enjoy none of these privileges, and to establish, by manifest proof, the merits of these men whom I am now commemorating. Their loftiest praise has been already spoken. For in magnifying the city I have magnified them, and men like them whose virtues made her glorious. And of how few Hellenes can it be said as of them, that their deeds, when weighed in the balance, have been found equal to their fame! Methinks that a death such as theirs has been gives the true measure of a man's worth ; it may be the first revelation of his virtues, but is at any rate their final seal. For even those who come short in other ways may justly plead the valor with which they have fought for their country ; they have blotted out the evil with the good, and have benefited the state more by their public services than they have injured her by their private actions. None of these men were enervated by wealth or hesitated to resign the pleasures of life ; none of them put off the evil day in the hope, natural to poverty, that a man, though poor, may one day become rich. But, deeming that the punishment of their enemies was sweeter than any of these things, and that they could fall in no nobler cause, they determined, at the hazard of their lives, to be honorably avenged, and to leave the rest. They resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness ; but in the

face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer, rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonor, but on the battle-field their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory.

"Such was the end of these men; they were worthy of Athens, and the living need not desire to have a more heroic spirit, although they may pray for a less fatal issue. The value of such a spirit is not to be expressed in words. Any one can discourse to you forever about the advantages of a brave defense which you know already. But instead of listening to him, I would have you day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her; and when you are impressed by the spectacle of her glory, reflect that this empire has been acquired by men who knew their duty and had the courage to do it, who in the hour of conflict had the fear of dishonor always present to them, and who, if ever they failed in an enterprise, would not allow their virtues to be lost to their country, but freely gave their lives to her as the fairest offering which they could present at her feast. The sacrifice which they collectively made was individually repaid to them; for they received again each one for himself a praise which grows not old, and the noblest of all sepulchres—I speak not of that in which their remains are laid, but of that in which their glory survives, and is proclaimed always and on every fitting occasion, both in word and deed. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of famous men; not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions in their own country, but in foreign lands there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone, but in the hearts of men.

. . . . . .

"I have paid the required tribute, in obedience to the law, making use of such fitting words as I had. The tribute of deeds has been paid in part; for the dead have been honorably interred, and it remains only that their children should be maintained at the public charge until they are grown up; this is the solid prize with which, as with a garland, Athens crowns her sons living and dead, after a struggle like theirs. For where the rewards of virtue are greatest, there the noblest citizens are enlisted in the service of the state. And now, when you have duly lamented, every one his own dead, you may depart."

"Such," adds the historian, "was the order of the funeral celebrated, in this winter, with the end of which ended the first year of the Peloponnesian war."

Readers will feel the proud pathetic bravery, in struggle with the "more prevailing sadness," that animates the speech. An anticipative shadow of what was to come seems to have fallen backward on the spirit of the orator—or of the historian. For Thucydides was on the eve now of describing one of the most dreadful visitations that ever befell a people —the plague at Athens. Of this presently, but first we call attention to the striking likeness, in tone and even in expression, between the funeral oration of Pericles and the address delivered by President Lincoln, at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery. The topics and sentiments of the great Athenian orator would many of them be, with little adaptation, appropriate for use on an American Decoration Day. So well answers the heart of man to man, from race to race and from generation to generation!

Thucydides's description of the plague at Athens is remarkable for its stern realism and its restrained pathos. "I was myself attacked," the historian says, "and witnessed the sufferings of others." Here is a condensation of his account:

> Many who were in perfect health, all in a moment, and without any apparent reason, were seized with violent heats in the head and with redness and inflammation of the eyes. Internally the throat and the tongue were quickly suffused with blood, and the breath became unnatural and fetid. There followed sneezing and hoarseness; in a short time the disorder, accompanied by a violent cough, reached the chest; then fastening lower down, it would move the stomach and bring on all the vomits of bile to which physicians have ever given names; and they were very distressing. An ineffectual retching, producing violent convulsions, attacked most of the sufferers. . . . They insisted on being naked, and there was nothing which they longed for more eagerly than to throw themselves into cold water. And many of those who had no one to look after them actually plunged into the cisterns, for they were tormented by unceasing thirst, which was not in the least assuaged whether they drank little or much. They could not sleep. . . . Either they died on the seventh or ninth day, not of weakness, for their strength was not exhausted, but of internal fever, which was the end of most; or, if they survived, then the disease descended into the bowels

and there produced violent ulceration; severe diarrhœa at the same time set in, and at a latter stage caused exhaustion, which finally, with few exceptions, carried them off. . . . Some, again, had no sooner recovered than they were seized with a forgetfulness of all things, and knew neither themselves nor their friends.

The malady took a form not to be described, and the fury with which it fastened upon each sufferer was too much for human nature to endure. . . . Most appalling was the despondency which seized upon any one who felt himself sickening; for he instantly abandoned his mind to despair and, instead of holding out, absolutely threw away his chance of life. Appalling too was the rapidity with which men caught the infection; dying like sheep if they attended on one another; and this was the principal cause of mortality. . . . But whatever instances there may have been of such devotion, more often the sick and the dying were tended by the pitying care of those who had recovered, because they knew the course of the disease and were themselves free from apprehension. For no one was ever attacked a second time, or not with a fatal result. . . . The dead lay as they had died, one upon another, while others hardly alive wallowed in the streets and crawled about every fountain craving for water. The temples in which they lodged were full of the corpses of those who died in them; for the violence of the calamity was such that men, not knowing where to turn, grew reckless of all law, human and divine. The customs which had hitherto been observed at funerals were universally violated, and they buried their dead, each one as best he could. Many having no proper appliances because the deaths in their household had been so frequent, made no scruple of using the burial-place of others. When one man had raised a funeral pile, others would come, and throwing on their dead first, set fire to it; or when some other corpse was already burning, before they could be stopped would throw their own dead upon it and depart.

There were other and worse forms of lawlessness which the plague introduced at Athens. Men who had hitherto concealed their indulgence in pleasure now grew bolder. For, seeing the sudden change,—how the rich died in a moment, and those who had nothing immediately inherited their property,—they reflected that life and riches were alike transitory, and they resolved to enjoy themselves while they could, and to think only of pleasure. Who would be willing to sacrifice himself to the law of honor, when he knew not whether he would ever live to be held in honor? The pleasure of the moment and any sort of thing which conduced to it took the place both of honor and of expediency. No fear of God or law of man deterred a criminal. Those who saw all

perishing alike, thought that the worship or neglect of the gods made no difference. For offenses against human law no punishment was to be feared; no one would live long enough to be called to account. Already a far heavier sentence had been passed and was hanging over a man's head; before that fell, why should he not take a little pleasure?

Is not that powerfully written? The power of it lies largely in its self-evidencing genuineness. The grim reality described revives in the life-like limning of the artist. A detail follows in the text of Thucydides which we must reproduce here for the light that it throws, first, on the historian's own individual character displayed in his way of reporting it, and then on the life of the ancient world as that life was qualified by the prevailing religion of the times. Thucydides:

In their troubles they [the Athenians] naturally called to mind a verse which the elder men among them declared to have been current long ago:

"A Dorian war will come and a plague with it."

There was a dispute about the precise expression; some saying that *limos*, a famine, and not *loimos*, a plague, was the original word. Nevertheless, as might have been expected, for men's memories reflected their sufferings, the argument in favor of *loimos* prevailed at the time. But if ever in future years another Dorian war arises, which happens to be accompanied by a famine, they will probably repeat the verse in the other form. The answer of the oracle to the Lacedæmonians when the god was asked "whether they should go to war or not," and he replied, "that if they fought with all their might they would conquer, and that he himself would take their part," was not forgotten by those who had heard of it, and they quite imagined that they were witnessing the fulfillment of his words. The disease certainly did set in immediately after the invasion of the Peloponnesians, and did not spread into Peloponnesus in any degree worth speaking of, while Athens felt its ravages most severely, and next to Athens the places which were most populous.

How different the dry skepticism of Thucydides from the devout credulity with which Herodotus would have recounted those fulfillments of oracular prophecy!

The Athenians, light-hearted and high-hearted as they

were, felt depressed. They blamed Pericles as the author of their miseries. Thucydides reports the proudly dignified, reproving, yet inspiriting speech with which the "Olympian" encountered and subdued their mood. "The popular indignation," however, so Thucydides says, "was not pacified until they had fined Pericles; but soon afterward, with the usual fickleness of the multitude, they elected him general and committed all their affairs to his charge." But Pericles did not long survive to light and guide the Athenian state on its now perilous way. In the third year of the war he died. The admiring portrait that Thucydides draws of the character of this great statesman and orator is too noble, alike in its subject and in its art, not to be supplied to our readers. Thucydides is singular in seldom according personal praise. But with Pericles he was fascinated, and he could not refrain his hand from the few strokes that would fix his favorite's image forever, a possession to posterity. The admirers of Webster will not fail to see how well a great statesman and orator of our own nation might have sat for the following picture:

PERICLES.

> After his death his foresight was even better appreciated than during his life. . . . He, deriving authority from his capacity and acknowledged worth, being also a man of transparent integrity, was able to control the multitude in a free spirit; he led them rather than was led by them; for, not seeking power by dishonest arts, he had no need to say pleasant things, but, on the strength of his own high character, could venture to

oppose and even to anger them. When he saw them unseasonably elated and arrogant, his words humbled and awed them ; and, when they were depressed by groundless fears, he sought to reanimate their confidence. Thus Athens, though still in name a democracy, was, in fact, ruled by her greatest citizen. But his successors were more on an equality with one another, and, each one struggling to be first himself, they were ready to sacrifice the whole conduct of affairs to the whims of the people.

The notes that we have made for extracts from Thucydides to be laid before our readers, almost hopelessly perplex our choice. For we must needs choose in a most Spartan spirit of hard-hearted rejection. (We counsel those of our readers who can do so, to read the whole history. Mr. Jowett's translation is republished here — without the notes, useful only to scholars, that increase the cost of the English edition —Dr. A. P. Peabody introduces it with a brief but admirable essay.) On the whole, there are two things which we could never forgive ourselves for omitting, and to these two things, with many suppressed cries of regret that so it must be, we submit to limit ourselves.

The first of these two things is the account of the Corcyræan Revolution. Cor-cy'ra (modern Corfu) was an island colony from Corinth that had become an ally of Athens. It was a highly flourishing place. In the height of the Peloponnesian war, the city became the theatre of internal dissensions, which grew to the rank of revolution. It was a strife of oligarchy with democracy, the oligarchical interest, of course, favoring Sparta and opposing Athens. The presence, or the imminence, of two mutually hostile fleets, the one Athenian, and the other Spartan, naturally intensified the passions of the parties in strife. When at length the Spartan fleet had apparently withdrawn, during an interval of nine days while the Athenians were hovering near, the popular faction committed every species of violence. Many of the opposite party had fled to sanctuary in the temple of He're (Juno). Some fifty of these were in-

duced to come out and stand a trial. They were all condemned to die. Now Thucydides:

The majority would not come out, and, when they saw what was going on, destroyed one another in the inclosure of the temple where they were, except a few, who hung themselves on trees, or put an end to their own lives in any other way which they could. And during the seven days which Eu-rym′e-don, after his arrival, remained with his sixty ships, the Corcyræans continued slaughtering those of their fellow-citizens whom they deemed their enemies; they professed to punish them for their designs against the democracy, but in fact some were killed for motives of personal enmity, and some because money was owing to them, by the hands of their debtors. Every form of death was to be seen, and every thing and more than every thing that commonly happens in revolutions, happened then. The father slew the son, and the suppliants were torn from the temples and slain near them; some of them were even walled up in the temple of Di-o-ny′sus, and there perished. To such extremes of cruelty did revolution go; and this seemed to be the worst of revolutions, because it was the first.

Following this brief account of the state of things in Corcyra, there come some reflections on revolution in general which illustrate the philosophizing taste and capacity of the historian's mind. We give a considerable extract:

Not long afterward the whole Hellenic world was in commotion; in every city the chiefs of the democracy and of the oligarchy were struggling, the one to bring in the Athenians, the others the Lacedæmonians. Now, in time of peace, men would have had no excuse for introducing either, and no desire to do so, but when they were at war, and both sides could easily obtain allies to the hurt of their enemies and the advantage of themselves, the dissatisfied party were only too ready to invoke foreign aid. And revolution brought upon the cities of Hellas many terrible calamities, such as have been and always will be while human nature remains the same, but which are more or less aggravated and differ in character with every new combination of circumstances. In peace and prosperity both states and individuals are actuated by high motives, because they do not fall under the dominion of imperious necessities; but war which takes away the comfortable provision of daily life is a hard master, and tends to assimilate men's characters to their conditions.

When troubles had once begun in the cities, those who followed car-

ried the revolutionary spirit further and further, and determined to outdo the report of all who had preceded them by the ingenuity of their enterprises and the atrocity of their revenges. The meaning of words had no longer the same relation to things, but was changed by them as they thought proper. Reckless daring was held to be loyal courage; prudent delay was the excuse of a coward; moderation was the disguise of unmanly weakness; to know every thing was to do nothing. Frantic energy was the true quality of a man. A conspirator who wanted to be safe was a recreant in disguise. The lover of violence was always trusted and his opponent suspected. He who succeeded in a plot was deemed knowing, but a still greater master in craft was he who detected one. On the other hand, he who plotted from the first to have nothing to do with plots, was a breaker up of parties and a poltroon who was afraid of the enemy. In a word, he who could outstrip another in a bad action was applauded, and so was he who encouraged to evil one who had no idea of it. The tie of party was stronger than the tie of blood, because a partisan was more ready to dare without asking why. . . .

The cause of all these evils was the love of power originating in avarice and ambition, and the party spirit which is engendered by them when men were fairly embarked in a contest. For the leaders on either side used specious names, the one party professing to uphold the constitutional equality of the many, the other the wisdom of an aristocracy, while they made the public interests, to which in name they were devoted, in reality their prize. Striving in every way to overcome each other, they committed the most monstrous crimes; yet even these were surpassed by the magnitude of their revenges, which they pursued to the very utmost, neither party observing any definite limits either of justice or public expediency, but both alike making the caprice of the moment their law. Either by the help of an unrighteous sentence, or grasping power with the strong hand, they were eager to satiate the impatience of party spirit. Neither faction cared for religion; but any fair pretense which succeeded in effecting some odious purpose was greatly lauded. And the citizens who were of neither party fell a prey to both; either they were disliked because they held aloof, or men were jealous of their surviving.

Thus revolution gave birth to every form of wickedness in Hellas. The simplicity, which is so large an element in a noble nature, was laughed to scorn and disappeared. An attitude of perfidious antagonism everywhere prevailed; for there was no word binding enough, nor oath terrible enough, to reconcile enemies. Each man was strong only in the conviction that nothing was secure; he must look to his own

safety, and could not afford to trust others. Inferior intellects generally succeeded best. For aware of their own deficiencies, and fearing the capacity of their opponents, for whom they were no match in powers of speech, and whose subtle wits were likely to anticipate them in contriving evil, they struck boldly and at once. But the cleverer sort, presuming in their arrogance that they would be aware in time, and disdaining to act when they could think, were taken off their guard and easily destroyed.

Now in Corcyra most of these deeds were perpetrated, and for the first time. . . . When men are retaliating upon others, they are reckless of the future, and do not hesitate to annul those common laws of humanity to which every individual trusts for his own hope of deliverance should he ever be overtaken by calamity; they forget that in their own hour of need they will look for them in vain.

How modern that seems! But how lurid it is! One might almost imagine himself reading some other than Burke (not a wiser, but a less passionate than he) in reflections on the French Revolution. A state of things like what Thucydides here describes, the forecast of Clay and Webster dreaded for this American nation, when, in 1850, they provided those compromises of national policy which postponed imminent civil war a decade of years. The dreaded state of things might yet indeed have come upon us had our civil war lasted, when it came, as the Peloponnesian war lasted.

Our next extract from Thucydides will be a passage of his history that, besides being of interest for illustration of the historian's style and of national or individual character, is also of interest for itself as describing a truly remarkable incident of the war. We refer to the celebrated Sicilian expedition. This enterprise was nothing less than an attempt on the part of Athens, adventured in the utmost stress of the Peloponnesian war, to capture Syracuse in Sicily, a Greek city nearly as populous and powerful as Athens herself. The magnificent light-heartedness, tempered by tears, with which the undertaking was entered upon, the inexhaustible spirit with which through various fortune it was prosecuted, the approach that it made to success, failing but as it were by the

breadth of a hair, and, finally, the dreadful disaster, the remediless overthrow, fleet and army annihilated, with which it was overwhelmed—all this Thucydides recounts in a narrative which for picturesqueness and pathos and power it would be hard to overmatch out of the pages of any historian, ancient or modern. The whole transaction seemed more like tragedy than like history. It was a spectacle to wonder at rather than to believe in—the prowess that Athens displayed. One beholding it might more easily suppose himself looking at a miracle enacted on the stage, than at occurrences taking place in real life. It is not surprising that for once the spell of reticence is broken on the lips of Thucydides. In a passage unique in his history, this self-contained historian says:

> Athens was obliged to import every thing from abroad, and resembled a fort rather than a city. In the day-time the citizens guarded the battlements by relays; during the night every man was on service except the cavalry; some at their places of arms, others on the wall, summer and winter alike, until they were quite worn out. But worse than all was the cruel necessity of maintaining two wars at once, and they carried on both with a determination which no one would have believed unless he had actually seen it. That, blockaded as they were by the Peloponnesians, who had raised a fort in their country, they should refuse to let go Sicily, and, themselves besieged, persevere in the siege of Syracuse, which as a mere city, might rank with Athens, and—whereas the Hellenes generally were expecting at the beginning of the war, some that they would survive a year, others two or perhaps three years, certainly not more, if the Peloponnesians invaded Attica—that in the seventeenth year from the first invasion, after so exhausting a struggle, the Athenians should have been strong enough and bold enough to go to Sicily at all, and to plunge into a fresh war as great as that in which they were already engaged—how contrary was all this to the expectation of mankind!

The Athenian Nic'i-as, whom, slow, conservative, timid, the readers of that charming book of heroic romance, Plutarch's Lives, will remember in contrast with the dashing, and brilliant, and profligate Alcibiades, had begged the Athenian

assembly to ponder well the perils of the project before they undertook it. But Alcibiades, with the ardor of irresponsible unscrupulous youth, urged them on, and prevailed. Thucydides says :

> All alike were seized with a passionate desire to sail, the elder among them convinced that they would achieve the conquest of Sicily—at any rate such an armament could suffer no disaster; the youth were longing to see with their own eyes the marvels of a distant land, and were confident of a safe return ; the main body of the troops expected to receive present pay, and to conquer a country which would be an inexhaustible mine of pay for the future. The enthusiasm of the majority was so overwhelming that, although some disapproved, they were afraid of being thought unpatriotic if they voted on the other side, and therefore held their peace.

An omen, or what the Athenians were disposed to regard as an omen, occurred. Thucydides seems to separate himself from his countrymen, in relating the circumstance disinterestedly as follows :

> While they were in the midst of their preparations the Her'mæ or square stone figures carved after the ancient Athenian fashion, and standing everywhere at the door-ways both of temples and private houses, in one night had nearly all of them throughout the city their faces mutilated. The offenders were not known, but great rewards were publicly offered for their detection, and a decree was passed that any one, whether citizen, stranger, or slave, might without fear of punishment disclose this or any other profanation of which he was cognizant. The Athenians took the matter greatly to heart—it seemed to them ominous of the fate of the expedition ; and they ascribed it to conspirators who wanted to effect a revolution and to overthrow the democracy.

The actual setting out is thus described :

> Early in the morning of the day appointed for their departure, the Athenians and such of their allies as had already joined them went down to the Piræus and began to man the ships. The entire population of Athens accompanied them, citizens and strangers alike. The citizens came to take farewell, one of an acquaintance, another of a kinsman, another of a son ; the crowd as they passed along were full of hope and full of tears, hope of conquering Sicily, tears because they doubted

whether they would ever see their friends again, when they thought of the long voyage on which they were sending them. At the moment of parting the danger was nearer; and terrors which had never occurred to them when they were voting the expedition now entered into their souls. Nevertheless their spirits revived at the sight of the armament in all its strength and of the abundant provision which they had made. The strangers and the rest of the multitude came out of curiosity, desiring to witness an enterprise of which the greatness exceeded belief.

No armament so magnificent or costly had ever been sent out by any single Hellenic power. . . . On the fleet the greatest pains and expense had been lavished by the trierarchs and the state. The public treasury gave a drachma a day to each sailor, and furnished empty hulls for sixty swift sailing vessels, and for forty transports carrying hoplites. All these were manned with the best crews which could be obtained. The trierarchs, besides the pay given by the state, added somewhat more out of their own means to the wages of the upper ranks of rowers and of the petty officers. The figure-heads and other fittings provided by them were of the most costly description. Every one strove to the utmost that his own ship might excel both in beauty and swiftness. The infantry had been well selected and the lists carefully made up. There was the keenest rivalry among the soldiers in the matter of arms and personal equipment. And while at home the Athenians were thus competing with one another in the performance of their several duties, to the rest of Hellas the expedition seemed to be a grand display of their power and greatness, rather than a preparation for war. . . . Men were quite amazed at the boldness of the scheme and the magnificence of the spectacle, which were everywhere spoken of, no less than at the great disproportion of the force when compared with that of the enemy against whom it was intended. Never had a greater expedition been sent to a foreign land ; never was there an enterprise in which the hope of future success seemed to be better justified by actual power.

When the ships were manned and every thing required for the voyage had been placed on board, silence was proclaimed by the sound of the trumpet, and all with one voice before setting sail offered up the customary prayers; these were recited, not in each ship, but by a single herald, the whole fleet accompanying him. On every deck both officers and men, mingling wine in bowls, made libations from vessels of gold and silver. The multitude of citizens and other well-wishers who were looking on from the land joined in the prayer. The crews raised the Pæan, and when the libations were completed put to sea. After sailing out for some distance in single file, the ships raced with one another as far

as Æ-gi'na: thence they hastened onward to Corcyra, where the allies who formed the rest of the army were assembling.

It will be impossible to detail, even in a summary manner, the incidents of the struggle at Syracuse. The success of the Athenians depended upon their being able to complete an investment of the city. Already the Syracusan assembly were on the point of discussing the question of a capitulation, when Gylippus, a Lacedæmonian general, approached with succour for the besieged. Thucydides:

He arrived just at the time when the Athenians had all but finished their double wall, nearly a mile long, reaching to the Great Harbor; there remained only a small portion toward the sea, upon which they were still at work. Along the remainder of the line of wall, which extended toward Trogilus [Troj'i-lus] and the northern sea, the stones were mostly lying ready; a part was half-finished, a part had been completed and left. So near was Syracuse to destruction.

The end came. First there was a sea-fight in which the Athenian fleet was disastrously defeated. So broken now in spirit were the invaders that, not even for the purpose of seeking to escape, could they be prevailed upon to re-embark in the vessels that remained to them. A retreat by land was resolved upon. The contrast between the end of the expedition and that holiday picnicking commencement of it which Thucydides described, is incomparably striking and pathetic. Thucydides:

On the third day after the sea-fight, when Nicias and Demosthenes thought that their preparations were complete, the army began to move. They were in a dreadful condition; not only was there the great fact that they had lost their whole fleet, and instead of their expected triumph had brought the utmost peril upon Athens as well as upon themselves, but also the sights which presented themselves as they quitted the camp were painful to every eye and mind. The dead were unburied, and when any one saw the body of a friend lying on the ground he was smitten with sorrow and dread, while the sick or wounded who still survived but had to be left were even a greater trial to the living and more to be pitied than those who were gone. Their prayers and lamentations drove their companions to distraction; they would beg that they

might be taken with them, and call by name any friend or relation whom they saw passing ; they would hang upon their departing comrades and follow as far as they could, and when their limbs and strength failed them and they dropped behind many were the imprecations and cries which they uttered. So that the whole army was in tears, and such was their despair that they could hardly make up their minds to stir, although they were leaving an enemy's country, having suffered calamities too great for tears already, and dreading miseries yet greater in the unknown future. There was also a general feeling of shame and self-reproach—indeed, they seemed, not like an army, but like the fugitive population of a city captured after a siege ; and of a great city too. For the whole multitude who were marching together numbered not less than forty thousand. Each of them took with him any thing he could carry which was likely to be of use. Even the heavy-armed and cavalry, contrary to their practice when under arms, conveyed about their persons their own food, some because they had no attendants, others because they could not trust them ; for they had long been deserting, and most of them had gone off all at once. Nor was the food which they carried sufficient ; for the supplies of the camp had failed. Their disgrace and the universality of the misery, although there might be some consolation in the very community of suffering, was nevertheless at that moment hard to bear, especially when they remembered from what pomp and splendor they had fallen into their present low estate. Never had an Hellenic army experienced such a reverse. They had come intending to enslave others, and they were going away in fear lest they would be themselves enslaved. Instead of the prayers and hymns with which they had put to sea, they were now departing amid appeals to heaven of another sort. They were no longer sailors but landsmen, depending, not upon their fleet, but upon their infantry. Yet in face of the great danger which still threatened them all these things appeared endurable.

Nicias exhorted the wretched troops with noble spirit. The key in which, according to Thucydides, this invalid general spoke to his men is given in the following two sentences at the close of his harangue :

If you now escape your enemies, those of you who are not Athenians may see once more the home for which they long, while you Athenians will again rear aloft the fallen greatness of Athens. For men, and not walls or ships in which are no men, constitute a state.

The last sentence foregoing reads like the original of a passage in a well-known English poem; but it is perhaps itself from an original in Greek poetry, older than Thucydides. The English poem to which we refer is Sir William Jones's Ode in Imitation of Alcæus. The imitative character of that poem associates it so naturally with the general subject of the present volume, that we may quote a few lines of it here, in parallel to Thucydides reporting Nicias:

What constitutes a state?
Not high-raised battlement or labored mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;
Not cities proud with spires and turrets crowned.
. . . .
No! men, high-minded men,
. . . .
These constitute a state.

High heart did not avail. The retreating Athenian army suffered every hardship and melted rapidly away. Reaching a river under close pursuit, they hoped to secure a little respite. The respite they actually secured is thus described by Thucydides:

Being compelled to keep close together they fell one upon another, and trampled each other under foot: some at once perished, pierced by their own spears; others got entangled in the baggage and were carried down the stream. The Syracusans stood upon the farther bank of the river, which was steep, and hurled missiles from above on the Athenians, who were huddled together in the deep bed of the stream and for the most part were drinking greedily. The Peloponnesians came down the bank and slaughtered them, falling chiefly upon those who were in the river. Whereupon the water at once became foul, but was drank all the same, although muddy and dyed with blood, and the crowd fought for it.

At last, when the dead bodies were lying in heaps one upon another in the water, and the army was utterly undone, some perishing in the river, and any who escaped being cut off by the cavalry, Nicias surrendered to Gylippus, in whom he had more confidence than in the Syracusans. He entreated him and the Lacedæmonians to do what they pleased with himself, but not to go on killing the men.

What they pleased to do with Nicias was to put him to death. "No one of the Hellenes in my time was less deserving of so miserable an end; for he lived in the practice of every virtue." So, with frugally expressed, but not frugal, praise Thucydides dismissed Nicias.

The fate of the rank and file of the surrendered army was more lingering, but not less dreadful. Thucydides:

> The captive Athenians and allies they deposited in the quarries, which they thought would be the safest place of confinement.
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> Those who were imprisoned in the quarries were at the beginning of their captivity harshly treated by the Syracusans. There were great numbers of them, and they were crowded in a deep and narrow place. At first the sun by day was still scorching and suffocating, for they had no roof over their heads, while the autumn nights were cold, and the extremes of temperature engendered violent disorders. Being cramped for room they had to do every thing on the same spot. The corpses of those who died from their wounds, exposure to the weather, and the like, lay heaped one upon another. The smells were intolerable; and they were at the same time afflicted by hunger and thirst. During eight months they were allowed only about half a pint of water and a pint of food a day. Every kind of misery which could befall man in such a place befell them. This was the condition of all the captives for about ten weeks. At length the Syracusans sold them, with the exception of the Athenians and of any Sicilians or Italian Greeks who had sided with them in the war. The whole number of the public prisoners is not accurately known, but they were not less than seven thousand.
>
> Of all the Hellenic actions which took place in this war, or indeed of all the Hellenic actions which are on record, this was the greatest—the most glorious to the victors, the most ruinous to the vanquished; for they were utterly and at all points defeated, and their sufferings were prodigious. Fleet and army perished from the face of the earth; nothing was saved, and of the many who went forth few returned home.
>
> Thus ended the Sicilian expedition.

And thus shall end our presentation of Thucydides.

PHILOSOPHY.

IV.

PLATO

We go from history to philosophy. It is a marked transition. But the change, we trust, will be grateful to our readers. If to any among them this should not be the case, let such consider two things fitted to smooth the present transition, namely, first, that Thucydides was something of a philosopher in his history; and, secondly, that Plato may fairly be made something of an historian in his philosphy. For is not history, according to Carlyle, the essence of innumerable biographies? And Plato shall serve in great part as biographer of Socrates.

PLATO.

Socrates is not more easily foremost among Greek philosophers, than is Plato foremost among Greek philosophical writers. This distinction, of philosopher and philosophical writer, it is necessary in the present case to make, for the reason that Socrates, as our readers will not need to be reminded, did his whole work in the intellectual world with use of tongue alone, never once publishing a written word. Foremost of Greek philosophical writers, we have not hesitated to pronounce Plato. But we think of Plato's illustrious disciple, Aristotle, and we are almost ready to say that were the terms of the question only a little changed—were we to decide, not which of the two was the greater philo-

sophical writer, but which was the greater philosophical genius, we should need to pause and to hesitate. While to Plato, however, philosophy was the one exclusive pursuit of his intellectual life, philosophy was simply one of various intellectual pursuits to Aristotle. Poet as well as philosopher—poet more than philosopher, some might be tempted to say—was Plato. But he wrote his poetry in the form of philosophy. Aristotle, besides being a philosopher, was a kind of encyclopædist. He by no means, like Plato, gave his literary production always the one form of philosophy so-called. We should not, perhaps, go much amiss to say that Aristotle's chief motive, even in literature, was scientific and practical, while Plato's chief motive, even in philosophy, was literary and poetical.

Plato is a voluminous writer. And he enjoys the fortune, singular among ancient classical authors, to survive in all his works. In fact he may in a sense be said to survive in more than all his works; for many works have come down to us bearing Plato's name, that Plato never wrote. The critics differ greatly among themselves on the question of the genuineness of various works attributed to the hand of Plato. We shall not trouble our readers with any details of the controversies that on this point have, from very early times down to the present, well-nigh literally raged among scholars. In a case in which authorities so eminent, and so evenly mated in eminence, as Grote and Jowett, arrive at conclusions so divergent, one may wisely make up one's mind to be content with something short of absolute certainty. Happily as to all those works ascribed to Plato, which we in any case should wish to lay before our readers, there is universal agreement.

We need not even mention by title the productions, a long list, that editors of Plato's text usually print as belonging to their author. The titles, being most of them names of persons, are generally not at all significant of the nature of the

works entitled. Among the most important may be mentioned the Republic—with the Timæus—the Laws, the Symposium, or Banquet, the Phædrus, the Gorgias, the The-æ-te'tus, the Pro-tag'o-ras, the Par-men'i-des; and, finally, a group of five pieces relating more or less closely to the trial and the death of Socrates, namely, the Me'no, the Eu-thyph'rus, the Apology, the Crito, and the Phædo. Of these works, the Apology is the only one not cast in conversational form, and the spirit of the Apology too is in a high degree conversational. There is, however, a difference observable among these. Into some of the dialogues the dramatic element enters more largely than it does into others. In the Laws, for example, a work of Plato's old age, you find long stretches of disquisition not interrupted at all with exchange of question and answer. The purely philosophic interest, where that preponderates with him, inclines the author to monologue; but where the literary interest prevails, there is much vivacious exhibition of character in well-imagined incident and well-invented conversation.

The Republic is, with one exception, (the Laws,) the largest, and it is, without exception, the greatest, of Plato's productions. It is named from an episode in it. The impropriety of the naming is less gross than might seem, for the episode is so long that it threatens to absorb the whole work. If, according to the title, the Republic ought primarily to give us the writer's ideal of the state, incidentally, in Plato's ample way of treating his subject, it does, in fact, give us his ideas and speculations on a wide range of topics. Of these, education is one. Plato is beforehand with all other writers on this theme. The reader is pleased and surprised to find Herbert Spencer, for example, anticipated by Plato in one of the most striking and most influential of the modern author's thoughts on method in education, as follows: "A freeman ought to be a freeman in the acquisition of knowledge. . . . Knowledge acquired under compulsion has no

hold on the mind. . . . Let early education be a sort of amusement." The influence exerted by Plato's Republic to fructify many generations of minds, may be estimated when it is recalled that Cicero's De Republica, St. Augustine's City of God, Sir Thomas More's Utopia, Bacon's New Atlantis, not to mention any thing more recent, have been the fruit, direct or indirect, of this great Greek original. The divining prescience of Plato's genius and imagination caught sight from afar of some of the very latest phases of modern thought. Read the Republic and you will encounter suggestions of the division of labor, the oneness of all knowledge, the universal reign of law, the equality of woman with man. We are bound, however, to add, that in order to reach oases, fresh and fair, of what will seem to you really valuable contributions to intellectual wealth, you will have to traverse wide encompassing wastes of about as barren speculation and refining, as are anywhere to be found in the world of literature.

Of Plato's Republic we shall not undertake here to give an exhaustive account. We think we can serve our readers better. It is, as we set out with intimating, our plan to make our reproduction of Plato centre chiefly about the person of Socrates. Indeed, in any just representation of Plato, Socrates could not but be a very conspicuous figure. Plato gives his master the chief part in nearly every one of his dialogues, and some of his dialogues he puts wholly into his master's mouth, by making Socrates speak throughout, reporting, to select friends of his, conversations that he has somewhere held with persons perhaps casually encountered by him in the streets of Athens, or between Athens and the Piræus. This latter is the case with the Republic. The properly, the characteristically, Socratic element is, however, present in very different degrees in different dialogues.

Vain were it to seek the construction of any orderly philosophical system out of the writings of Plato. His period of intellectual productiveness covered many years, in the course

of which his mind made progress, from stage to stage reaching opinions not entirely consistent with opinions that had preceded them, or with opinions that might follow them. The chronological order of production for the dialogues it is, in most instances, impossible to determine. In a state of the case such as this, evidently we may proceed with all freedom, following any order of treatment that we choose. This, until we reach those dialogues which concern the trial and the death of Socrates. Then we shall do best to hit as nearly as we can the chronological order determined by the relation that each dialogue self-evidently bears to the closing events of the great philosopher's life.

From the Republic we first take, for illustration of the art with which Plato enlivens and garnishes the text of what had else been somewhat tedious and bare dialectical dialogue, the following pretty fable, attributed by him to tradition. Readers will be glad to see the true original of a legend with which, through allusion encountered in literature, they will already perhaps have become familiar. Gy'ges, (soft G,) who figures in this tale from Plato, figures also in the populous page of Herodotus. Indeed, Herodotus tells of him, with some important variations, this identical story. The feature of the ring is peculiar to Plato. Along with the fable itself, we give enough of the setting of the fable to show with what illustrative purpose the fable was used by the speaker in Plato's dialogue. Glaucon is the speaker. He undertakes to set forth, for Socrates to overthrow it, a notion which he avers to be current and accepted among men, namely, the notion that injustice is better policy than justice. Men practice justice, Glaucon says, only where they cannot successfully practice injustice. Make them free to do as they please, and they will please to be unjust. Here is his argument, in the words of Plato:

> The liberty which we are supposing may be most conveniently given to them in the form of such a power as is said to have

been possessed by Gyges, the ancestor of Crœsus, the Lydian. For Gyges, according to the tradition, was a shepherd and servant of the king of Lydia, and, while he was in the field, there was a storm and earthquake, which made an opening in the earth at the place where he was feeding his flock. He was amazed at the sight, and descended into the opening, where, among other marvels, he beheld a hollow brazen horse, having doors, at which he stooping and looking in saw a dead body, of stature, as appeared to him, more than human, and having nothing on but a gold ring; this he took from the finger of the dead, and reascended out of the opening. Now the shepherds met together, according to custom, that they might send their monthly report concerning the flock to the king; and into their assembly he came having the ring on his finger, and as he was sitting among them he chanced to turn the collet of the ring toward the inner side of the hand, when instantly he became invisible, and the others began to speak of him as if he were no longer there. He was astonished at this, and again touching the ring he turned the collet outward and reappeared; thereupon he made trials of the ring, and always with the same result; when he turned the collet inward he became invisible, when outward he reappeared. Perceiving this, he immediately contrived to be chosen messenger to the court, where he no sooner arrived than he seduced the queen, and with her help conspired against the king, and slew him, and took the kingdom. Suppose now that there were two such magic rings, and the just put on one of them, and the unjust the other; no man is of such adamantine temper that he would stand fast in justice,—that is what they think. No man would dare to be honest when he could safely take what he liked out of the market, or go into houses and lie with any one at his pleasure, or kill or release from prison whom he would, and in all respects be like a god among men. Then the actions of the just would be as the actions of the unjust; just or unjust would arrive at last at the same goal. And this is surely a great proof that a man is just, not willingly or because he thinks that justice is any good to him individually, but of necessity, for wherever any one thinks that he can safely be unjust, there he is unjust. For all men believe in their hearts that injustice is far more profitable to the individual than justice, and he who takes this line of argument will say that they are right. For if you could imagine any one having such a power, and never doing any wrong or touching what was another's, he would be thought by the lookers on to be a most wretched idiot, although they would praise him to one another's faces, and keep up appearances with one another from a fear that they too might be sufferers of injustice. Enough of this.

"Enough of this," says Plato's speaker, and enough surely, say we, at least for the purpose of showing the lamentable standard of ethics that must have prevailed in antiquity. In close connection with the foregoing passage occurs another passage worth quoting. Glaucon still speaks. He tells Socrates that the "eulogists of injustice," that is to say, men in general—for men in general according to this witness, whatever may be the strain of their talk, really act on the principle that injustice is better than justice—men in general, holds Glaucon, would expect for the ideally just person—what fortune in the world do you suppose? Why, nothing less than this: "He will be scourged, racked, bound, will have his eyes burnt out, and at last, after suffering every kind of evil, he will be impaled." Language strangely approaching the truth of what did indeed befall the historical Just Man! No wonder one sometimes sees it quoted as a marvelous quasi-prophetic expression from the lips of Socrates. Mark, however, Socrates does not himself use this language at all, nor is this language by any one used to describe, as it were in prophecy, what in the corrupted currents of the world the wholly just man, should such a one appear, would suffer. It is simply hyperbole for expressing the instinctive belief of mankind that justice here has to go to the wall—the inference being that it is a mistake to be just. This utterance, it will thus be seen, is not well quoted to exemplify the deep divination of Socrates in matters of morals. It is not deep divination—whosever it is; and it is not Socrates's—whatever it is. There is a curious coincidence, and that is the whole of it.

We are so close just here upon the unexpected transition by which Plato makes Socrates conduct his dialogue across to its ostensible subject, namely, the Ideal State, that we must show our readers how the thing is managed. A whole book, (the Republic, one dialogue, is divided into ten books, this division being, however, not the author's, but some ancient editor's,) a whole book has been occupied with re-

port of a conversation, at first of the most casual sort, apparently tending no whither, that sprang up between Socrates, on the one side, and several interlocutors, on the other, during an evening at the house of a friend in the Piræus. Nothing could exceed the verisimilitude of the representation. You irresistibly feel this to be a minute section cut right out of the heart of Athenian life. Plato is a consummate artist in work of this kind. No one else ever knew so well as did he how to create the illusion of life-like reality, in dialogue invented for the purpose of philosophical dissertation. You do, indeed, weary at length of the innumerable monotonous assent made to be yielded by the over-complaisant disciples of Socrates to all the postulates of the master. But in this very thing perhaps it is, that the reporter or inventor most faithfully portrays the actual scenes of conversation that took place between the great Athenian inquisitor and those with whom he talked.

Reporter or inventor—which is Plato in these dialogues of his? If both, then in what proportion the one and the other? When does he invent and when report? How may we distinguish between the fact and the fiction? The answers to these questions must be somewhat unsatisfactory. No one can tell. That Plato both reported and invented seems tolerably certain. There is an ancient tradition, not very well authenticated, which represents Socrates as exclaiming, on sight of some of the dialogues of Plato, "What quantities of lies this young fellow is telling about me!" There can be little doubt that the form of the dialogue is veritably Socratic. But that under the Socratic form Plato has often put doctrines of which his master was equally innocent and ignorant, there can be as little doubt. We shall have to content ourselves with remaining at many points hopelessly uncertain whether it is really Socrates or Plato that thinks what Socrates is made to maintain in the pages of Plato. Plato was unquestionably the greatest of the disci-

ples of Socrates. If Socrates took supreme possession of his pupil with the tongue, the pupil has his revenge—a noble one—for he, too, certainly has in his turn taken supreme possession of Socrates with his pen.

As we were saying, from a strain of conversation not apparently tending at all to the purpose suggested in the title of the dialogue, Plato makes a very unexpected passage to that form of discussion which has given its name to the Republic. It is on this wise: The party have been discussing very widely the nature of justice and injustice. Socrates says (this is well on in the second book of the Republic) that his companions, in the interview being reported by him, expressed a wish to have him proceed with his investigation. Now Plato: (we condense, but readers closely attending will see how the shift is made from the subject of justice and injustice in general to the subject of The State, as exhibiting justice or injustice on a magnified scale:)

> They wanted to arrive at the truth, first, about the nature of justice and injustice, and, secondly, about their relative advantages. I told them, what I really thought, that the search would be no easy one, and would require very good eyes. . . .
>
> I propose [Socrates says that he said] that we inquire into the nature of justice and injustice, as appearing in the State first, and secondly in the individual, proceeding from the greater to the lesser and comparing them. . . .
>
> Shall we make the attempt? I said; although I cannot promise you as an inducement that the task will be a light one. Reflect therefore.
>
> I have reflected, said Adeimantus, and am anxious that you should proceed.

Socrates proceeded. To do that, he seemed never to need any inducement beyond the seldom absent inducement of willing souls to listen. In this case he in fact proceeded to so liberal an extent that the whole conversation, transferred to these pages, would fill the volume from cover to cover. It appears not to occasion Plato any embarrassment, that a conversation so long could hardly either have taken place, as represented, during a single evening session of the

company; or have afterward, as represented, been, during a single evening session of other friends, reported by Socrates.

In the course of Socrates's setting forth of what should enter into the perfect state, that brave and free philosopher criticises Homer on the score of immorality. The poet of the ideal society should, according to Socrates—or to Plato—be restricted to representations of the gods, for example, very different from many of those in which Homer indulges. It would be quite interesting, were there room for it here, to bring forward some of the strictures thus applied to Homer by Plato—or perhaps really, as ostensibly, applied by Socrates through Plato.

These things, with many more that, like these, we are obliged to omit, our readers will find spread out at large in Mr. Jowett's incomparable translation of Plato's works. When Dr. Kendrick wrote his admirable paper on Plato in the New American Cyclopædia, (the Appletons' first issue,) he was compelled to say that there was then not yet any adequate English translation of Plato's works entire. This is no longer the case, for by universal consent of scholars and literary men, Mr. Jowett's version leaves little or nothing to be desired, in the way either of scholarlike fidelity to the original Greek or of free idiomatic grace in English expression. Our quotations from the text of Plato will all of them, with certain exceptions to be particularly noted in their place, be taken from Mr. Jowett's work.

Every body has heard of the so-styled "Platonic love." A passage of the Republic will explain what this conception is. It may simply be premised that there was rife in the ancient Greek and Roman world a practice of impure affinity between man and man. The word "love" in the mouth of a Greek was quite as likely to mean this indecent relation, as it was to mean any more natural bond of affection between the two different sexes. In the ideal republic, such an unchaste relation of man to man was not to be tolerated. It is

tonic and purifying to read the passage in Plato from which we limit ourselves to take the following sentence containing the conclusion, on the subject, arrived at by the colloquists. It is Socrates who speaks :

> Then I suppose that in the city which we are founding you would make a law that a friend should use no other familiarity to his love than a father would use to his son, and this only for a virtuous end, and he must first have the other's consent ; and this rule is to limit him in all his intercourse, and he is never to go further, or, if he exceeds, he is to be deemed guilty of coarseness and bad taste.

Such, in the Platonic description, is "Platonic love."

The topic of love had been led up to by a passage of discourse concerning education in music as a part of the training of youth in the perfect state. Music, as a branch of culture, is more inclusive, in the Greek use of the term, than in ours. You are to bear in mind the derivation of the word from "Muse," and thus to conceive of music as embracing whatever goes to the culture of the soul to appreciation of the beautiful. The following long Greek sentence—a good sample, by the way, of the informal unorganized aggregation of members and clauses that, in contrast with the periodic structure more natural to the Latin, built up the typical sentence of Plato—the following sentence, we say, will convey an idea of the general cultivating effect attributed by Socrates to music. Delicious writing it is—at least to the taste trained to enjoy it, delicious. Socrates says: (we give Plato's own words :)

> Is not this, I said, the reason, Glaucon, why musical training is so powerful, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul, on which they mightily fasten, bearing grace in their movements, and making the soul graceful of him who is rightly educated, or ungraceful if ill educated ; and also because he who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art and nature, and with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over, and receives into his soul the good, and becomes noble and good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in

the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason of the thing; and when reason comes he will recognize and salute her as a friend with whom his education has made him long familiar.

With exquisite verisimilitude, Plato makes Socrates, in the midst of his imaginings, to be now and again interrupted by his interlocutors with questions of a practical sort concerning the possibility of realizing his dreamed-of ideal society. Socrates puts off his questioners, with suave and self-poised postponement, until at last they threaten him with what he pleasantly calls the "third wave" of difficulty. This form of expression alludes to the supposed fact, or the real, that every third wave of a tide coming in, is stronger than the two preceding. Here is the way in which Socrates shows himself equal to the occasion that the dialogue has created for him. Plato:

Now, then, I said, I go to meet that which I liken to the greatest of waves, yet shall the word be spoken, even though the running over of the laughter of the wave shall just sink me beneath the waters of laughter and dishonor; and do you attend to me.

Proceed, he said.

I said: Until, then, philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who follow either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never cease from ill—no, nor the human race, as I believe—and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day: this was what I wanted but was afraid to say, my dear Glaucon; for to see that there is no other way either of private or public happiness is indeed a hard thing.

Of Plato's own experience in the attempt to make his words come true, and to exhibit to the world the edifying spectacle of an actual state presided over by a philosopher—in the person of an exemplar of the class no less renowned than himself—we shall presently have something interesting to say. That will be when we reach the point, not forgotten, though postponed, of telling our readers very briefly the story of Plato's life.

The true lover of Plato, wishing to commend his author to students of literature supposed as yet not acquainted with his writings, experiences a difficulty that others than he will hardly appreciate, in making his omissions and selections from pages that to himself seem, every one of them, for some reason delectable. But we must be strictly impartial, and remember that it is less our purpose to praise Plato, than to present him as he is to our readers. The Republic, in especial, is a vast repository of all things that in Plato are most characteristic and most admirable. It is extremely hard to hasten, on a path wherein so much allures one to loiter. With one more yielding to the decoy of gracious thought couched in most gracious expression, we break the delaying spell and take a great step forward. We must have our readers enjoy with us the following passage, in which they will find it not difficult to fancy a spirit present strangely greater than any mere philosophy, a spirit akin, almost, to the New Testament in the highest power of that inspired book. Plato: (Socrates chiefly speaking:)

> Then there is a very small remnant, [some readers will remember Mr. Matthew Arnold's late teaching among us on the subject of the "remnant,"] Adeimantus, I said, of worthy disciples of philosophy: perchance some noble nature, brought up under good influences, and in the absence of temptation, who is detained by exile in her service, which he refuses to quit; or some lofty soul born in a mean city, the politics of which he contemns or neglects; and perhaps there may be a few who, having a gift for philosophy, leave other arts, which they justly despise, and come to her; and peradventure there are some who are restrained by our friend Theages's bridle, (for Theages, you know, had every thing to divert him from philosophy; but his ill health kept him from politics.) My own case of the internal sign is indeed hardly worth mentioning, as very rarely, if ever, has such a monitor been vouchsafed to any one else. Those who belong to this small class have tasted how sweet and blessed a possession philosophy is, and have also seen and been satisfied of the madness of the multitude, and known that there is no one who ever acts honestly in the administration of States, nor any helper who will save any one who maintains the cause of the just. Such a saviour would be like

a man who has fallen among wild beasts—unable to join in the wickedness of his fellows, neither would he be able alone to resist all their fierce natures, and therefore he would be of no use to the State, or to his friends, and would have to throw away his life before he had done any good to himself or others. And he reflects upon all this, and holds his peace, and does his own business. He is like one who retires under the shelter of a wall in the storm of dust and sleet, which the driving wind hurries along; and when he sees the rest of mankind full of wickedness, he is content if only he can live his own life and be pure from evil or unrighteousness, and depart in peace and good-will, with bright hopes.

And he who does this, he said, will have done a great work before he departs.

Yes, I said, a great work, but not the greatest unless he find a state suitable to him; for in a state which is suitable to him he will have a larger growth, and be the saviour of his country as well as of himself.

The "internal sign," to which Socrates in the foregoing passage alludes, is the monition of his "dæmon," or "spirit"—a kind of divinity within him that governed his conduct. Just what Socrates meant is not agreed. Perhaps nothing more than his conscience, perhaps an indwelling supernatural being. Whatever the Socratic "dæmon" was, it was a benign and beneficent influence, very necessary to be taken account of in trying to understand the character and conduct of Socrates. How much pathos of wisdom there is in the sigh of Socrates for a suitable State in which the anointed philosopher might do his work for the saving of mankind! Opportunity is as indispensable as the man.

Our seven-league step forward now—to the beginning of the seventh book of the Republic. Here we have a very famous passage—more famous none, perhaps, in the whole cycle of Platonic literature. We give, in sufficient citation from the original text as translated by Mr. Jowett, the celebrated figure under which Plato makes Socrates set forth the central doctrine of the Platonic philosophy, the doctrine of "ideas" so-called:

After this, I said, imagine the enlightenment or ignorance of our nature in a figure: Behold human beings living in a sort of under-

ground den, which has a mouth open toward the light and reaching all across the den; they have been here from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them; for the chains are arranged in such a manner as to prevent them from turning round their heads. At a distance above and behind them the light of a fire is blazing, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have before them, over which they show the puppets.

I see, he said.

And do you see, I said, men passing along the wall carrying vessels which appear over the wall; also figures of men and animals, made of wood and stone and various materials; and some of the passengers, as you would expect, are talking, and some of them are silent?

That is a strange image, he said, and they are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, I replied. . . .

This allegory, I said, you may now append to the previous argument; the prison is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, the ascent and vision of the things above you may truly regard as the upward progress of the soul into the intellectual world.

If any reader of ours has found it difficult to conceive exactly, in all its features, the situation described by Socrates, that reader may fairly, we think, transfer the blame, in considerable part, to Plato himself.

Of actual things, the prisoners supposed know only the shadows. To them the shadows are the realities. So, Plato taught, this whole frame of things, the visible universe, is nothing but a colossal system of shadows. We mortals see nothing as it is, but every thing only as it is given in a shadow or image of itself. The business of the philosopher is to pass from the world of shadows to the world of realities. A world of realities there is. For things that we see are not sheer illusions. They are true, though imperfect, images of the true. Every shadow—in other words, every object of sense—has somewhere its reality corresponding. There is an antitype for every type. God made what we see in the world after certain patterns or ideas. These ideas are the sole realities.

The things fashioned after them are images only. Philosophy deals with objects themselves, and not with the images of objects. Philosophy therefore deals with ideas. The emphasis of the Platonic doctrine of ideas is not that the apparent world is unreal, but that the unapparent world is real. Plato is thus not an idealist, in the modern sense of that philosophical term. He is a realist rather.

The Platonic conception of the universe of things about us, objects of our various senses, as being simply a frame-work of shadows, or images, answering to a transcendent world of realities beyond the reach of any thing within us but thought —the Platonic doctrine, we say, that this, the supersensual world of ideas, of archetypes, far from being a mere dream of the mind, constitutes, in fact, the only real and substantial thing that exists—this Platonic conception and doctrine, it probably was, that suggested to Milton his making of Raphael say,

> What if earth
> Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

It might be a question whether, but for Plato's doctrine of ideas, the method of allegorical interpretation for the Bible, once prevalent so widely in the Christian Church, and still, in the hands of bold and ingenious, but ill-instructed, expounders of Scripture, showing itself ready here or there to be revived—it is doubtful, we say, whether the allegorizing style of biblical exposition would, apart from Plato's influence, ever once have had its rise in the powerful initiative of the great Origen. Realism, so-called in historical metaphysics, that is, the doctrine that for every general term, like man, horse, tree, there is a real universal object, man, horse, tree, existing apart from any particular object, man, horse, tree; this doctrine, the contrast to nominalism (which holds that the general term is merely a term, with no outward reality corresponding) is the fruit of Platonic philosophy. Sweden-

borg, with his system of correspondences, derives no doubt from Plato. Such is the long and wide reach of influence in the world of thought.

We pass over the exposition given by Plato in The Republic to his doctrine of the threefold nature of man—"body, soul, and spirit," to use the not most happily chosen terms under which the phraseology of our English Scriptures has accustomed us to hear the doctrine spoken of—we pass over this, and dispatch our sketch of the greatest of Plato's works by presenting the brief paragraph with which the dialogue closes. There has immediately preceded an elaborate myth or legend, the fabrication of Plato, which, had we room for it, we should gladly insert. True, it would puzzle, more than it would enlighten, the reader; but it would, spite of that, partly indeed because of that, serve to exhibit Plato more fully such as he really is. The tale is of a vision of Er—a man represented as returning from the dead to bring thence a message to the living. The conclusion of the whole book, following that tale, is this:

> And thus, Glaucon, the tale has been saved, and has not perished, and may be our salvation if we are obedient to the word spoken; and we shall pass safely over the river of forgetfulness, and our soul will not be defiled. Wherefore my counsel is, that we hold fast to the heavenly way and follow after justice and virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in the games, who go round to gather gifts, we receive our reward. And it shall be well with us both in this life and in the pilgrimage of a thousand years which we have been reciting.

The Republic is doubly misnamed. First, the ideal State is not, according to Plato, a republic; and, secondly, the dialogue is not about the ideal State. The feature of the ideal State is a huge parenthesis occurring in the course of discussion concerning the nature of justice. It is, to use mathematical language, in the nature of lemma to this main

proposition. To this main proposition the return is duly made at length ; and, in noble climax to the argument, a plea for the immortality of the soul is introduced. There is a secondary title to the dialogue, "Concerning Justice." This would, perhaps, be more faithfully descriptive, but "The Republic" has securely established itself as the name of the greatest of the dialogues of Plato.

Plato's dream of the perfect State is a singular mixture of what seem to us discordant elements. He would banish poets and enthrone philosophers. He would have wives and children common. (The late Oneida Community was in this last feature almost a realization of Plato's republic.)

It happened to the poet-philosopher, author of this dialogue, to have an opportunity to attempt, on a noble scale, the actualization of his ideal. He visited Syracuse, a city flourishing now in a magnificent prosperity under the reign, or tyranny so-called, of Dionysius. Introduced to that ruler, Plato opened to him the vision that had ravished his own soul. But Dionysius was enraged instead of enchanted, and he had Plato for his pains sent to the market to be sold as a slave. The philosopher, so the tyrant exclaimed, shall try for himself the truth of his doctrine that the virtuous man is still happy even in chains. Plato's friends bought him in for a round sum, and got him safe back to Athens. Here, or near here, he spent twenty years of his life, teaching philosophy. Disciples thronged to him, of the choicest classes of citizens, from every part of Hellas. The fact that, during the life-time of the teacher, Athens went through the agony of the Peloponnesian war, and came out spoiled of her empire—this great fact of the national history you would hardly once be compelled to remember from any allusion occurring in the dialogues. Plato seems to have been as little a patriot in his time as was Goethe in his time, and as little disturbed by any painful sympathy with his kind from the serenity of philosophic contemplation.

After twenty years thus spent, Plato received from a friend at court a second summons to Syracuse. Dionysius was dead, and Dionysius II., his son, had succeeded to the throne. Plato's friend at court, Dion, was a kinsman of this prince, and he had inspired the young sovereign with great desire to know Plato. The Athenian philosopher met with an overwhelming welcome to Syracuse. The tyrant himself went down to greet him when he landed, and a public sacrifice of thanksgiving signalized an advent so auspicious. The promise was fair. A new order of things began at the Syracusan court. Philosophy became the fashion. It is said that Dionysius was actually ready to change the frame-work of the State—to become himself a constitutional, in place of remaining an absolute, monarch. He proposed also to give back their freedom to the subjected Greek cities of Sicily. Plato however preferring that his pupil should be thoroughly grounded in philosophy before he began to put philosophy in practice, nothing practical was done. Meantime the young tyrant was tiring of philosophy, and the courtiers about him were poisoning his mind against both Dion and the "Athenian sophist." It resulted that Dion was exiled, and that Plato, after having been kept luxuriously for a time as a prisoner in the palace, was dismissed to return home. Dionysius, they say, remarked to the philosopher embarking, "You will speak ill of Dionysius in your academy." "Nay, but in the academy we shall have no time to speak at all of Dionysius," was the reply.

It would hardly be believed, but after ten years more Plato was a third time sent for to come to Syracuse. Dion should be recalled, if Plato would come. Plato went, but Dion, so far from being recalled, now had his property confiscated and his wife given away from himself to another man. Plato had the sad fortune to be himself the bearer of these ill tidings to his friend met on the homeward voyage at the Olympian games. Our readers will be comforted—pagan-

wise—to know that Dion had subsequently his turn, a short one, of triumph over his enemy. He entered Syracuse as a conqueror at the head of an army—only, however, to be basely murdered by a treacherous friend.

Plato now resumed his courses in philosophy at Athens, and composed the dialogues that have through so many generations continued his influence and his fame. Diogenes Laertius has a life of him. He taught till he was eighty-one years of age, and, according to Cicero, died pen in hand, seated at his desk. He was a native of Ægi'na. The year of his birth was the same as that in which Pericles died. It is difficult to imagine that a life lived so placidly as, despite his Syracusan adventures, was Plato's, could have coincided with a period of history so stormy and so disastrous as that of the Peloponnesian war to the Athenian state. The clash of arms seems removed indefinitely far away from the sacred silence of the olive grove of academe. Plato must, however, we suppose, have done duty with the rest, watching against the foe in that evil day which, in the philosopher's early manhood, came upon Athens. Probably, too, a boy of fifteen, he went down to the Piræus, with the whole holiday city, to see the brilliant Sicilian expedition make that gay start—to tempt its danger and to meet its doom.

The Timæus is described by Mr. Jowett as of all the writings of Plato "the most obscure and most repulsive to modern readers," while the most influential of all over the ancient and mediæval world. This is not a characterization likely in a very marked degree to enlist the interest of English readers. The Timæus is a sort of pendant to the Republic. We must needs give it in the same breath both hail and farewell. Even in the act of saying this, we have, with much effort, to swallow a mighty qualm of misgiving; for we bethink us of such gleams of beauty as the following:

> When a weaker or lesser frame is the vehicle of a great and mighty soul, or conversely, when they are united in the opposite way, then the

whole animal is not fair, for it is defective in the most important of all symmetries; but the fair mind in the fair body will be the fairest and loveliest of all sights to him who has the seeing eye.

Nevertheless we pass on. On the whole, the entertaining and fair in the Timæus yields to the tedious and disgustful. Of the Laws, the very longest of Plato's works, we need say no more than that this dialogue is a kind of redaction, a modification, an accommodation, of the Republic. It was, as has been intimated, written in the author's old age. It presents a rather pathetic falling off from the wealth and splendor of the earlier work. So great, indeed, is the disparity, that some critics reject the Laws as spurious. They will not have it that the author of the Republic could possibly produce a work like the Laws.

There is in Plato no more distinctively Greek, no more distinctively Platonic, dialogue than the Symposium, or Banquet. This is a report of a conversation in which, with others less distinguished, the comic poet Aristophanes, the tragic poet Ag'a-thon, (an author known to us only by name, none of his works surviving, yet plausibly conjectured to have been in genius hardly second to Æschylus or Sophocles,) the famous and infamous Alcibiades, are represented as taking part. The place is the house of Agathon, who celebrates a feast in honor of a victory of his muse. Love is the subject of the dialogue. Each speaker has it for a kind of task imposed upon him to make the finest speech he can in favor of love. Love is here conceived of in such a way, a way so equivocal—in short, so pagan and so Grecian—that a large part of the whole dialogue would be unfit for reproduction in these pages. But were the several discourses unobjectionable on the score of moral purity, still it were a taste not to be acquired, save through long habituation to the Greek classics that would qualify thoroughly to enjoy the Symposium of Plato. It is a piece of Greek writing at the extreme point of remove from modern standards.

To one passage in particular of this dialogue there attaches an interest derived from frequency of allusion to it in recent literature, that might make us wish to admit it here, in sufficient exemplification of the whole composition. But unfortunately the inseparable original quality of this passage puts such transfer of it quite out of the question. There would probably be fewer sentimental allusions to Plato's idea of human beings as created mutual halves, each half to wander about in quest of its fellow, were it better known in what terms, and with pleasantry how unchaste, that idea is introduced in the pages of Plato—fitly, too, introduced as from the mouth of the ribald comic poet Aristophanes. There could not be a better illustration of the change from ancient Greek taste and morality to Christian, than the contrast between the original in Plato, and the forms under which that original is made to appear in modern allusion. So much for moral ugliness made æsthetically beautiful in Plato's Symposium.

But there is moral beauty too, made more beautiful, in this unique piece of literature. Alcibiades, coming in drunk, is made by Plato to become the eulogist of Socrates. His eulogy is doubly so characteristic, first of the author, and then of the subject—perhaps trebly so characteristic we should say, thus adding, thirdly, of Plato himself—that we must give this passage at least in extract from the Symposium. For sheer want of room we have to omit the life-like description of the disorderly arrival of Alcibiades with his reveling rout, and the well-turned banter, never erring from urbanity, that passed between Alcibiades and Socrates, before the former began, as follows :

> I shall praise Socrates in a figure which will appear to him to be a caricature, and yet I do not mean to laugh at him, but only to speak the truth. I say, then, that he is exactly like the masks of Si-le'nus, which may be seen sitting in the statuaries' shops, having pipes and flutes in their mouths ; and they are made to open in the middle, and there are

images of gods inside them. I say, also, that he is like Mar'sy-as, the satyr. You will not deny, Socrates, that your face is like that of a satyr. Aye, and there is a resemblance in other points, too. For example, you are a bully,—that I am in a position to prove by the evidence of witnesses, if you will not confess. And are you not a flute-player? That you are, and a far more wonderful performer than Marsyas. For he, indeed, with instruments charmed the souls of men by the power of his breath, as the performers of his music do still: for the melodies of Olympus are derived from the teaching of Marsyas, and these, whether they are played by a great master, or by a miserable flute-girl, have a power which no other have; they alone possess the soul and reveal the wants of those who have need of gods and mysteries, because they are inspired. But you produce the same effect with the voice only, and do not require the flute; that is the difference between you and him. When we hear any other speaker, even a very good one, his words produce absolutely no effect upon us in comparison, whereas the very fragments of you and your words, even at second-hand, and however imperfectly repeated, amaze and possess the soul of every man, woman, and child, who comes within hearing of them. And if I were not afraid that you would think me drunk, I would have sworn as well as spoken to the influence which they have always had, and still have, over me. For my heart leaps within me more than that of any Corybantian reveler, and my eyes rain tears when I hear them. And I observe that many others are affected in the same way. I have heard Pericles, and other great orators, but though I thought that they spoke well, I never had any similar feeling; my soul was not stirred by them, nor was I angry at the thought of my own slavish state. But this Marsyas has often brought me to such a pass, that I have felt as if I could hardly endure the life which I am leading; (this, Socrates, you admit;) and I am conscious that if I did not shut my ears against him, and fly from the voice of the siren, he would detain me until I grew old sitting at his feet. For he makes me confess that I ought not to live as I do, neglecting the wants of my own soul, and busying myself with the concerns of the Athenians; therefore I hold my ears and tear myself away from him. And he is the

SOCRATES.

only person who ever made me ashamed, which you might think not to be in my nature, and there is no one else who does the same. For I know that I cannot answer him or say that I ought not to do as he bids, but when I leave his presence the love of popularity gets the better of me. And therefore I run away and fly from him, and when I see him I am ashamed of what I have confessed to him. And many a time I wish that he were dead, and yet I know that I should be much more sorry than glad, if he were to die: so that I am at my wit's end. . . . He and I went on the expedition to Pot-i-dæ'a; there we messed together, and I had the opportunity of observing his extraordinary power of sustaining fatigue and going without food when our supplies were intercepted at any place, as will happen with an army. In the faculty of endurance he was superior, not only to me, but to every body; there was no one to be compared to him. Yet, at a festival, he was the only person who had any real powers of enjoyment, and, though not willing to drink, he could, if compelled, beat us all at that, and the most wonderful thing of all was that no human being had ever seen Socrates drunk; and that, if I am not mistaken, will soon be tested. His endurance of cold was also surprising. There was a severe frost, for the winter in that region was really tremendous, and every body else either remained indoors, or, if they went out, had on no end of clothing, and were well shod, and had their feet swathed in felts and fleeces: in the midst of this, Socrates, with his bare feet on the ice, and in his ordinary dress, marched better than any of the other soldiers who had their shoes on, and they looked daggers at him because he seemed to despise them.

I have told you one tale, and now I must tell you another, which is worth hearing, of the doings and sufferings of this enduring man while he was on the expedition. One morning he was thinking about something which he could not resolve; and he would not give up, but continued thinking from early dawn until noon—there he stood fixed in thought; and at noon attention was drawn to him, and the rumor ran through the wondering crowd that Socrates had been standing and thinking about something ever since the break of day. At last, in the evening after supper, some Ionians, out of curiosity, (I should explain that this was not in winter but in summer,) brought out their mats and slept in the open air that they might watch him and see whether he would stand all night. There he stood all night, as well as all day, and the following morning; and with the return of light he offered up a prayer to the sun, and went his way. . . . Many are the wonders of Socrates which I might narrate in his praise; most of his ways might, perhaps, be paralleled in others, but the most astonishing thing of all is

his absolute unlikeness to any human being that is or ever has been. You may imagine Bras'i-das and others to have been like Achilles; or you may imagine Nestor and An-te'nor to have been like Pericles; and the same may be said of other famous men; but of this strange being you will never be able to find any likeness, however remote, either among men who now are or who ever have been, except that which I have already suggested of Silenus and the satyrs; and this is an allegory not only of himself, but also of his words. For, although I forgot to mention this before, his words are ridiculous when you first hear them; he clothes himself in language that is as the skin of the wanton satyr—for his talk is of pack-asses, and smiths, and cobblers, and curriers, and he is always repeating the same things in the same words, so that an ignorant man who did not know him might feel disposed to laugh at him; but he who pierces the mask and sees what is within, will find that they are the only words which have a meaning in them, and also the most divine, abounding in fair examples of virtue, and of the largest discourse, or rather extending to the whole duty of a good and honorable man.

This, friends, is my praise of Socrates.

What a charming idealization of Socrates! Did Alcibiades ever utter it? Could he have uttered it? And drunk? Did Plato make it all up? However first produced, to what extent was it true of Socrates? Of Alcibiades? We never can certainly tell. But in any case the ideal itself, with its ravishing beauty, remains and is imperishable. That it should have sprung up at all in the bosom of a civilization so corrupt, is marvelous. That it should have had a living embodiment, as perhaps indeed in Socrates it had, is a marvel of marvels. That such an embodied ideal should have been pushed to the doom of the hemlock—alas, that that alone should not be marvelous! Those parts of Plato which tell the story of the end of this great teacher—teacher, rather than philosopher, we should ourselves be disposed to call Socrates—will follow presently. Meantime a brief term of delay with some other of Plato's works.

The Phædrus is a complement of the Banquet. Like that, it treats the subject of love. The two colloquists, Phædrus

and Socrates, take a walk together outside the wall, and Socrates, like Dr. Johnson, city-lover, is smitten with the charms of the country. The bits of delicious landscape and scenery in the dialogue we must transfer to our canvas. We use our magic ring of Gyges and invisibly join Socrates and Phædrus, as they walk and talk and behold. Plato:

Socrates. Turn this way; let us go to the I-lis'sus, and sit down at some quiet spot.

Phædrus. I am fortunate in not having my sandals, and as you never have any, I think that we may go along the brook and cool our feet in the water; this is the easiest way, and at midday and in the summer is far from being unpleasant.

Soc. Lead on, and look out for a place in which we can sit down.

Phædr. Do you see that tallest plane-tree in the distance?

Soc. Yes.

Phædr. There are shade and gentle breezes, and grass on which we may either sit or lie down.

Soc. Move on.

Phædr. I should like to know, Socrates, whether the place is not somewhere here at which Bo're-as is said to have carried off Or-i-thy'i-a from the banks of the Ilissus.

Soc. That is the tradition.

Phædr. And is this the exact spot? The little stream is delightfully clear and bright; I can fancy that there might be maidens playing near.

Soc. I believe that the spot is not exactly here, but about a quarter of a mile lower down, where you cross to the temple of Agra, and I think that there is some sort of altar of Boreas at the place.

Phædr. I don't recollect; but I wish that you would tell me whether you believe this tale. . . .

Soc. I must first know myself, as the Delphian inscription says; and I should be absurd indeed if, while I am still in ignorance of myself, I were to be curious about that which is not my business. And therefore I say farewell to all this; the common opinion is enough for me. For, as I was saying, I want to know, not about this, but about myself. Am I indeed a wonder more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simpler sort, to whom Nature has given a diviner and lowlier destiny? But here let me ask you, friend: Is not this the plane-tree to which you were conducting us?

Phædr. Yes, this is the tree.

Soc. Yes, indeed, and a fair and shady resting-place, full of summer

sounds and scents. There is the lofty and spreading plane-tree, and the agnus castus high and clustering, in the fullest blossom and the greatest fragrance; and the stream which flows beneath the plane-tree is deliciously cold to the feet. Judging from the ornaments and images, this must be a spot sacred to Ach-e-lo'us and the Nymphs; moreover there is a sweet breeze, and the grasshoppers chirrup; and the greatest charm of all is the grass, like a pillow gently sloping to the head. My dear Phædrus, you have been an admirable guide.

Phædr. I always wonder at you, Socrates; for when you are in the country you really are like a stranger who is being led about by a guide. Do you ever cross the border? I rather think that you never venture even outside the gates.

Soc. Very true, my good friend; and I hope that you will excuse me when you hear the reason, which is, that I am a lover of knowledge, and the men who dwell in the city are my teachers, and not the trees, or the country. Though I do, indeed, believe that you have found a spell with which to draw me out of the city into the country, as hungry cows are led by shaking before them a bait of leaves or fruit. For only hold up the bait of discourse, and you may lead me all round Attica, and over the wide world. And now, having arrived, I intend to lie down, and do you choose any posture in which you can read best. Begin.

What could be more charming? Rural, but not rustic, is the grace with which Plato touches these things. Plato is never rustic. Urbane he is always. (Is it not noteworthy that it is the urban so frequently that is the urbane?) Urbanity is a circumfluent charm that forever enfolds like an atmosphere whatever is Plato's. The thing, by the way, which Phædrus reads to Socrates, is a speech on love by the orator Lys'i-as. Phædrus has just been listening to this speech from the lips of the orator himself. He brings it delighted to Socrates; but Socrates banters him on it—with a critical irony that, apparently, reveals the philosopher's own low estimate of the rhetoric of his much admired contemporary.

The Gorgias is a noble dialogue. But there is a good deal of quibbling in it. We could not give our readers a really satisfactory idea of the barrenness, nay, the perplexing unworthiness, of much of what Plato here, as elsewhere, puts into the mouth of Socrates, except by making very extensive

extracts in literal translation from the original text. This, however, would take up large space to no profit for the reader—save the bare profit of learning how profitless, after all, was often the practical result of the Socratic interrogation. Gorgias was a celebrated sophist whom Socrates brings to confusion by involving him in self-contradiction. The frank truth, however, is that this is done unfairly. The sophist is sophistically snared. The Socratic method is always far greater than the Socratic result. By this we of course do not mean the method of sophistry. For sophistry is not the Socratic method. Sophistry not seldom intrudes. But an intruder it is. It does not keep the house. The Socratic method is inquiry, quest of definition, challenge of accepted beliefs. Nothing has ever surpassed, nothing could surpass, this method, in the use of a master, as an instrument of discipline to the mind. That Socrates found so much truth in the highest sphere of investigation, should surprise us, rather than that he found no more. Would the reader like to know just what is the main drift of the Gorgias? Strange to say, students of the Gorgias are not agreed. In simple truth, the dialogue is in nothing more life-like than in this, that it goes whither the wind blows, steering to no certain port. The port that the Gorgias does reach is shown in the following lofty and pathetic passage with which the dialogue closes. Socrates has been, with consummate art, made by Plato to foreshadow his own final doom of death; and then, framing a myth, he preaches from the myth a moral, for height of noble difficulty never perhaps equaled anywhere out of Scripture:

Socrates. Listen, then, as story-tellers say, to a very pretty tale, which I dare say that you may be disposed to regard as a fable only, but which, as I believe, is a true tale, for I mean, in what I am going to tell you, to speak the truth: Homer tells us how Zeus, and Po-sei'don, and Pluto, divided the empire which they inherited from their father. Now in the days of Cronos there was this law respecting the destiny of man, which

has always existed and still continues in heaven, that he who has lived all his life in justice and holiness shall go, when he dies, to the islands of the blest, and dwell there in perfect happiness out of the reach of evil; but that he who has lived unjustly, and impiously, shall go to the house of vengeance and punishment, which is called Tartarus. And in the time of Cronos, and even later in the reign of Zeus, the judgment was given on the very day on which the men were to die; the judges were alive, and the men were alive; and the consequence was that the judgments were not well given. Then Pluto and the authorities from the islands of the blest came to Zeus, and said that the souls found their way to the wrong places. Zeus said: "I shall put a stop to this; the judgments are not well given, and the reason is that the judged have their clothes on, for they are alive; and there are many having evil souls who are appareled in fair bodies, or wrapt round in wealth and rank, and when the day of judgment arrives many witnesses come forward and witness on their behalf that they have lived righteously. The judges are awed by them, and they themselves too have their clothes on when judging, their eyes, and ears, and their whole bodies are interposed as a veil before their own souls. This all stands in the way; there are the clothes of the judges and the clothes of the judged. What is to be done? I will tell you: In the first place, I will deprive men of the foreknowledge of death, which they at present possess: that is a commission, the execution of which I have already intrusted to Pro-me'theus; in the second place, they shall be entirely stripped before they are judged, for they shall be judged when they are dead; and the judge, too, shall be naked, that is to say, dead; he with his naked soul shall pierce into the other naked soul as soon as each man dies, he knows not when, and is deprived of his kindred, and has left his brave attire in the world above, and then the judgment will be just. I knew all about this before you did, and therefore I have made my sons judges; two from Asia, Mi'nos and Rhad-a-man'thus, and one from Europe, Æ'a-cus. And these, when they are dead, shall judge in the meadow where three ways meet, and out of which two roads lead, one to the islands of the blessed, and the other to Tartarus. Rhadamanthus shall judge those who come from Asia, and Æacus those who come from Europe. And to Minos I shall give the primacy, and he shall hold a court of appeal, in case either of the two others are in doubt; in this way the judgment respecting the last journey of men will be as just as possible."

This is a tale, Callicles, which I have heard and believe, and from which I draw the following inferences: Death, if I am right, is, in the first place, the separation from one another of two things, soul and body;

this, and nothing else. And after they are separated they retain their several characteristics, which are much the same as in life ; the body has the same nature and ways and affections, all clearly discernible ; for example, he who, by nature, or training, or both, was a tall man while he was alive, will remain as he was, after he is dead ; and the fat man will remain fat ; and so on ; and the dead man, who in life had a fancy to have flowing hair, will have flowing hair. And if he was marked with the whip and had the prints of the scourge, or of wounds, in him when he was alive, you might see the same in the dead body ; and if his limbs were broken or misshapen when he was alive, the same appearance would be visible in the dead. And in a word, whatever was the habit of the body during life, would be distinguishable after death, either perfectly, or in a great measure, and for a time. And I should infer that this is equally true of the soul, Callicles ; when a man is stripped of the body, all the natural or acquired affections of the soul are laid open to view. And when they come to the judge, as those from Asia came to Rhadamanthus, he places them near him and inspects them quite impartially, not knowing whose the soul is; perhaps he may lay hands on the soul of the great king, or of some other king or potentate, who has no soundness in him, but his soul is marked with the whip, and is full of the prints and scars of perjuries, and of wrongs which have been plastered into him by each action, and he is all crooked with falsehood and imposture, and has no straightness, because he has lived without truth. Him Rhadamanthus beholds, full of deformity and disproportion, which is caused by license and luxury and insolence and incontinence, and dispatches him ignominiously to his prison, and there he undergoes the punishment which he deserves. . . .

And, as I was saying, Rhadamanthus, when he gets a soul of this kind, knows nothing about him, neither who he is, nor who his parents are ; he knows only that he has got hold of a villain ; and seeing this, he stamps him as curable or incurable, and sends him away to Tartarus, whither he goes and receives his recompense. Or, again, he looks with admiration on the soul of some just one who has lived in holiness and truth ; he may have been a private man or not, and I should say, Callicles, that he is most likely to have been a philosopher who has done his own work, and not troubled himself with the doings of other men in his life-time ; him Rhadamanthus sends to the islands of the blest. Æacus does the same ; and they both have sceptres, and judge ; and Minos is seated looking on, as Odysseus in Homer declares that he saw him—

" Holding a sceptre of gold, and giving laws to the dead."

Now I, Callicles, am persuaded of the truth of these things, and I consider how I shall present my soul whole and undefiled before the judge in that day. Renouncing the honors at which the world aims, I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can, and when the time comes, to die. And to the utmost of my power I exhort all other men to do the same. And, in return for your exhortation of me, I exhort you also to take part in the great combat, which is the combat of life, and greater than every other earthly conflict. And I retort your reproach of me, and say, that you will not be able to help yourself when the day of trial and judgment, of which I was speaking, comes upon you; you will go before the judge, the son of Æ-gi'na, and when you are in the hands of justice you will gape and your head will swim round, just as mine would in the courts of this world, and very likely some one will shamefully box you on the ears, and put upon you every sort of insult.

Perhaps this may appear to you to be only an old wife's tale which you contemn. And there might be reason in your contemning such tales, if by searching we could find out any thing better or truer; but now you see that you and Polus and Gorgias, who are the three wisest of the Greeks of our day, are not able to show that we ought to live any life which does not profit in another world as well as in this. And of all that has been said, nothing remains unshaken but the saying, that to do injustice is more to be avoided than to suffer injustice, and that the reality and not the appearance of virtue is to be followed above all things, as well in public as in private life; and that when any one has been wrong in any thing, he is to be chastised, and that the next best thing to a man being just, is that he should become just, and be chastised and punished; also that he should avoid all flattery of himself as well as of others; of the few as of the many: and rhetoric and any other art should be used by him, and all his actions should be done, always with a view to justice.

Follow me, then, and I will lead you where you will be happy in life and after death, as your own argument shows. And never mind if some one despises you as a fool, and insults you, if he has a mind; let him strike you, by Zeus, and do you be of good cheer and do not mind the insulting blow, for you will never come to any harm in the practice of virtue, if you are a really good and true man. When we have practiced virtue in common, we will betake ourselves to politics, if that seems desirable, or we will advise about whatever else may seem good to us, for we shall be better able to judge then. In our present condition we ought not to give ourselves airs, for even on the most important subjects

we are always changing our minds; and what state of education does that imply? Let us, then, take this discourse as our guide, which signifies to us that the best way of life is to practice justice and every virtue in life and death. This way let us go, and in this exhort all men to follow, not in that way in which you trust and in which you exhort me to follow you; for that way, Callicles, is nothing worth.

We open the Parmenides and take at random a short section out of the conversation, to let our readers see for themselves what we have been meaning by our remarks on the barrenness of much that is encountered in Plato. Parmenides, the personage after whom the dialogue is named, was, at the date of the dialogue, an illustrious and a venerable figure in Greek philosophy. Plato sincerely reverenced the man. Socrates, junior to Parmenides, is represented as treating that grave and reverend senior freely indeed, as from his own character he must, but with respect. We strike into the dialogue at the point where Parmenides consents—under pressure of unanimous request—to show the company, a select one, the exhaustive process of dialectics which he was in the habit of applying to philosophical hypotheses. It must in justice be said that Parmenides enters upon the exercise in something of the spirit of one who consciously exhibits a piece of mere verbal dexterity. The subject is the idea of unity. Parmenides must needs have a respondent. "Shall I propose the youngest?" he asks. But we proceed now in the words of Plato; warning, meantime, the reader not curious to see how void of any thing to reward curiosity may be page after page of hard logic-chopping, that this next passage of quotation may safely be skipped. Parmenides speaks:

Shall I propose the youngest? He will be the most likely to say what he thinks, and not raise difficulties; and his answers will give me time to breathe. I am the one whom you mean, Parmenides, said Aristoteles; for I am the youngest, and at your service. Ask, and I will answer. Parmenides proceeded: If one is, he said, the one cannot be many? *Aris.* Impossible. *Par.* Then the one cannot have parts, and cannot be a whole? *Aris.* How is that? *Par.* Why, the part would

surely be the part of a whole? *Aris.* Yes. *Par.* And that of which no part is wanting, would be a whole? *Aris.* Certainly. *Par.* Then, in either case, one would be made up of parts, both as being a whole, and also as having parts? *Aris.* Certainly. *Par.* And, in either case, the one would be many, and not one? *Aris.* True. *Par.* But surely one ought to be not many, but one? *Aris.* Surely. *Par.* Then, if one is to remain one, it will not be a whole, and will not have parts? *Aris.* No. *Par.* And if one has no parts, it will have neither beginning, middle, nor end; for these would be parts of one? *Aris.* Right. *Par.* But then, again, a beginning and an end are the limits of every thing. *Aris.* Certainly. *Par.* Then the one, neither having beginning nor end, is unlimited? *Aris.* Yes, unlimited. *Par.* And therefore formless, as not being able to partake either of round or straight. *Aris.* How is that? *Par.* Why, the round is that of which all the extreme points are equidistant from the centre? *Aris.* Yes. *Par.* And the straight is that of which the middle intercepts the extremes? *Aris.* True. *Par.* Then the one would have parts, and would be many, whether it partook of a straight or of a round form? *Aris.* Assuredly. *Par.* But having no parts, one will be neither straight nor round? *Aris.* Right. *Par.* Then, being of such a nature, one cannot be in any place, for it cannot be either in another or in itself. *Aris.* How is that? *Par.* Because, if one be in another, it will be encircled in that other in which it is contained, and will touch it in many places; but that which is one and indivisible, and does not partake of a circular nature, cannot be touched by a circle in many places. *Aris.* Certainly not. *Par.* And one being in itself, will also contain itself, and cannot be other than one, if in itself; for nothing can be in any thing which does not contain it. *Aris.* Impossible. *Par.* But, then, is not that which contains other than that which is contained? for the same whole cannot at once be affected actively and passively, and one will thus be no longer one, but two? *Aris.* True. *Par.* Then one cannot be anywhere, either in itself or in another? *Aris.* No.

We do not know how much of this sort of thing our readers would like to see. Out of the Parmenides, however, alone, we could, we feel sure, satisfy the desire of the most desirous. There are in it not less than sixty stretched-out pages of uninterrupted hair-splitting—uninterrupted, mark, we say—not distinguishable in point of fruit or juice from what our readers have now seen. The Parmenides, taken as a whole,

is as good a specimen as any reader could wish to possess of a perfectly sterile, while consummately well-written, exercise in metaphysics.

And now for the farewell to Socrates, a man undoubtedly to us moderns the most engaging figure of the ancient Grecian world. Of the five chief pieces that relate to Socrates dying, or about to die, the Me'no is the most remotely and obscurely related to that topic. The personage from whom the dialogue takes its name is an old acquaintance of such of our readers as are familiar with Xenophon's Anabasis. He is one of the four generals who were treacherously captured by the Persian Tissaphernes. "A Thessalian Alcibiades," Mr. Jowett calls Meno.

The Euthyphro is next in order to the Meno. This dialogue discusses the true nature of piety. There is, throughout what Socrates in this dialogue says, a hardly disguised tone of reference to himself as accused of impiety.

The Apology purports to be the speech of Socrates to his judges, pronounced partly before the conviction, but partly also after, and then ostensibly in mitigation or commutation of his sentence to death. The whole piece is of surpassing interest, but too long to be here presented entire. It is already accessible to the public in a form at once for literary quality so admirable and for price so moderate, that we need hardly regret the necessity of omitting it from these pages. A little volume, entitled "Socrates," published by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, contains it, and with it enough more of the matter belonging to that group of dialogues which we are at present considering, to furnish readers with a most alluring picture of the martyr philosopher of antiquity. The "Socrates," by the way, would make a much better Sunday-school book than probably would on examination be found to be many another volume now having place in the average Sunday-school library. A second volume, prepared by the same hand, entitled "A Day in Athens with Socrates,"

may also be commended to our readers. The Apology was spoken in vain. Socrates was condemned to drink the hemlock. While he waits in prison till he may lawfully die—for a certain sacred ship must first return from Delos—he is visited there by his friend Crito, with a proposal that he make an escape. The dialogue entitled Crito gives us the conversation that ensued between the two. We have no means of knowing whether the incident of this visit and proposal really occurred or not. But nothing can harm the serene and immortal beauty of the representation. We use for our extracts from the Crito the little volume already alluded to, "Socrates." Here is the opening of the dialogue:

Socrates. Why have you come at this time of day, Crito? Is it not still quite early?

Crito. It is early indeed.

S. About what time is it?

C. Day is just beginning to dawn.

S. I wonder that the keeper of the prison was willing to answer your knock.

C. He is used to me now, Socrates, I have been here so often; and besides, he has received some kindness at my hands.

S. Have you just come, or have you been here some time?

C. Some little time.

S. Then why did you not wake me up at once, instead of sitting by in silence?

C. By Zeus, O Socrates, I for my part should not have wished to be awakened to such a state of sleeplessness and sorrow. But I have for some time been looking at you with wonder to see you sleep so serenely; and I purposely did not awaken you, that you might pass the remainder of your time as peacefully as possible. Often before in the course of your life have I esteemed you fortunate in having such a nature, but never so much as now, in this present misfortune, seeing how easily and calmly you bear it.

S. But do you not see, Crito, that it would be quite inconsistent in one of my age to be disturbed at having to die now?

C. But when others, Socrates, of the same age are overtaken by like misfortunes, their age does not prevent their being distressed at the fate before them.

S. That is true. But why have you come so early?

C. To bring bad news, Socrates; though not for you, it seems. But for myself and for all your friends it is indeed bitter and grievous; and I, above all others, shall find it most hard to bear.

S. What is it? Has the ship come from Delos, on whose arrival I am to die?

C. She has not actually arrived, but I suppose she will be here to-day, to judge from tidings brought by certain persons who have just come from Sunium and report that they left her there. It is evident, from what they say, that she will be here to-day, and thus to-morrow, Socrates, your life must needs end.

S. But this, Crito, is for the best. If it please the gods, so be it. I do not think, however, that the ship will arrive to-day.

C. Whence do you infer this?

S. I will tell you. I am to die on the morrow of the day on which the ship arrives.

C. So say they who order these things, you know.

S. Well, then, I do not think she will arrive on this coming day, but on the following one. I infer this from a certain dream which I had this very night, only a little while ago. It was by some lucky chance that you did not awaken me earlier.

C. What was your dream?

S. It seemed to me that a woman in white raiment, graceful and fair to look upon, came toward me, and, calling me by name, said:

"On the third day, Socrates, thou shalt reach the coast of fertile Phthia."

C. What a strange dream, Socrates!

S. But clear withal, Crito, it seems to me.

C. Only too clear. But, O beloved Socrates, be persuaded by me while there is yet time, and save yourself.

There follows hereupon a considerable stretch of conversation between Socrates and Crito, in which Crito urges every inducement, (including offer of money and personal help,) with the condemned man, to seek safety in escape, and Socrates gently but firmly puts every inducement aside. Socrates at length says:

S. Consider it thus. Suppose, as we were on the point of running away, or whatever else you may call it, the laws and the state should come and say: "Tell us, Socrates, what is this that you think of doing?

Are you not, by the deed which you are about to undertake, thinking to destroy, so far as in you lies, the laws and the whole state? For you do not deem it possible, do you, that that state can survive and not be overthrown in which the decisions of the courts do not prevail, but are by private individuals set aside and brought to naught?" How shall we reply, Crito, to this, and to other like questions? Any one, above all an orator, might have much to say in behalf of the law we are breaking, which commands that judgments once decreed shall be decisive. Or shall we make answer that the state has injured us and not given righteous judgment? Shall we say this, or what shall we say?

C. This, by Zeus, O Socrates.

S. What then, if the law answer: "And is this what was agreed between us, Socrates, or was it not rather that you should abide by the judgments decreed by the state? . . .

"In this very trial you were at liberty, if you had wished, to propose the penalty of exile, so that what you are now attempting to do against the will of the city, you could then have done with her consent. You boasted at that time that if you had to die you would not be distressed, for you preferred, as you said, death to exile. But now you feel no shame at the recollection of your own words, nor have you any reverence for us, the laws, since you are trying to destroy us, and are acting as would the meanest slave, trying to run away in defiance of the covenants and agreements according to which you had pledged yourself to be governed as a citizen. . . .

"Thus you will confirm the opinion of your judges, so that your sentence will appear to have been justly awarded. For whosoever is a corrupter of the laws is very sure to appear also as a corrupter of young and thoughtless men. . . . What language will you use, O Socrates? Will you affirm, as you have done here, that virtue and justice and institutions and laws are the things most precious to men. . . . All those discourses concerning justice and other virtue—what is to become of them? Or is it perhaps on account of your children that you wish to live, so that you may bring them up and educate them? But what then? Will you take them to Thessaly, and there bring them up and educate them, making them aliens to their country, that this also they may have to thank you for? Or perhaps you think that they will be better cared for and educated here in Athens for your being alive, even if you are not living with them. Your friends, you say, will look after them. But do you suppose that, while they will do this if you depart for Thessaly, they will not if you depart for Hades? Assuredly, if they who call themselves your friends are good for any thing, you must believe that they will.

"But, Socrates, be persuaded by us who have brought you up, and do not place your children or your life or any thing else above the right; that, when you have arrived in Hades, you may have all these things to urge in your defense before those who reign there. For neither in this life does it appear better or more just or more holy for you or for any one belonging to you thus to act, nor when you shall have arrived in the other world will it be to your advantage. As it is now, if you depart hence, you go as one wronged, not by us, the laws, but by men; but if you take to flight, thus disgracefully rendering back injustice and injury by breaking the covenants and agreements which you yourself made with us, and working evil against those whom least of all you ought to injure—your own self as well as your friends, your country, and ourselves—we shall be angry with you here while you are yet alive, and our brothers, the laws in Hades, will not receive you kindly, knowing that you sought, so far as in you lay, to destroy us. So do not, we beg you, let Crito persuade you to follow his advice rather than ours."

These, you must know, my dear friend Crito, are the words which I seem to hear, even as the Corybantes imagine that they hear the sound of the flutes; and their echo resounding within me makes me unable to hear aught beside. Know, therefore, that if you say any thing contrary to this, you will but speak in vain. Nevertheless, if you think that any thing will be gained thereby, say on.

C. No, Socrates, I have nothing more to say.

S. Then so let it rest, Crito; and let us follow in this way, since in this way it is that God leads.

With excellent taste and judgment, Plato tells the story of the end in a conversation made to take place after the lapse of an interval of time from the actual occurrence of the incidents related. The name of the dialogue in which this is done is the Phædo.

The distance of time interposed has the effect to subdue and soften the outlines of the action. The baldness and harshness that might otherwise have been felt, are quite enchanted away from the scene. Nothing is left to infuse one element of sharp or crude into the exquisite sweet pathos of the marvelous story. What wonder Cicero could never read the story without tears? Scarce to be wondered at, if, on reading the Phædo, Socrates's disciple Cle-om'bro-tus did indeed,

as is related of him, cast himself into the sea in a fit of vain remorse that he was so wanting to the master in his extremity, as not to take the trouble of being present with him at the closing scene. The contrast and the resemblance warrant the celebrated remark of the French infidel, Rousseau: "Socrates died like a philosopher, Jesus Christ died like a God." The present writer will never lose from his mind the impression received one midnight hour when alone in his room he read, for the first time, in the original Greek of the Phædo, the pathetic, pathetically noble, pathetically insufficient, argument of Socrates for the immortality of the soul. What a reach after, what a coming short of, the truth!

> So runs my dream, but what am I?
> An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry!

Such might well have been, such in effect was, the swan's utterance of dulcet and harmonious breath with which dying Socrates took his brave farewell of the here and sent forward his hail to the hereafter.

But we must not talk further about what our readers have yet to see. And how shall we show them the Phædo in its just light, without letting them see it all? But this, of course, is out of the question. The scenery, the reliefs, the transitions, the exchanges of question and reply, the slow and gradual growth of the atmosphere that envelops all and sets life as into a picture—these things we have to lose and, losing these, we run the risk of losing the Phædo. The gracious play of affectionate irony that beautifies the "coming bulk of death"—this disappears, and what a difference! The groping of hands that feel after immortality in the darkness—what shall compensate for that effect withdrawn? But there is no help for us, and—lest we grieve long enough to take up the room that might have been so used as to forestall

occasion of grieving—here is the conclusion to the most pleasing and most touching of all Plato's dialogues, the Phædo. We use once more the translation furnished in "Socrates:"

You, too, Simmias and Cebes, and all the rest of you, must each one day take this journey; "but now," as a tragic poet would say, "me the voice of fate is calling," and it is well-nigh time that I should think of the bath; for it seems better for me to bathe before drinking the poison, and not give the women the trouble of washing my body.

When he had thus spoken, Crito said: "Very well, Socrates; but what charge have you to give me or our friends here, about your children or any thing else, which we may most gratify you by fulfilling?"

"Only what I have always said, Crito," answered he, "nothing new; that if you will take heed to yourselves, you will, whatever you do, render me and mine and your own selves a service, even if you do not make any promises now. But if you do not take heed to yourselves, and will not try to follow in the path which I have now and heretofore pointed out, you will bring nothing to pass, no matter how many or how solemn promises you make."

"We will indeed try our best," said he; "but how do you wish us to bury you?"

"Just as you please," he answered, "if you only get hold of me, and do not let me escape you." And quietly laughing and glancing at us, he said:

"I cannot persuade Crito, my friends, that this Socrates who is now talking with you and laying down each one of these propositions is my very self; for his mind is full of the thought that I am he whom he is to see in a little while as a corpse; and so he asks how he shall bury me. Thus, that long argument of mine, the object of which was to show that after I have drunk the poison I shall be among you no longer, but shall go away to certain joys prepared for the blessed, seems to him but idle talk, uttered only to keep up your spirits as well as my own." . . .

Thus saying he got up and went into another room to bathe, and Crito followed him; but us he requested to stay behind. We remained, therefore, talking over with one another and inquiring into what had been said; ever and again coming back to the misfortune which had befallen us; for we looked upon ourselves as doomed to go through the rest of life like orphans, bereft of a father.

After he had bathed, his children were brought to him—for he had three sons, two very young, and one who was older—and the women of his household also arrived. And having talked with them, in the pres-

ence of Crito, and given them all his directions, he bade them depart, and himself returned to us. It was now near sunset, for he had spent a long time in the inner room. He came then and sat down with us, but he did not speak much after this. And the servant of the Eleven came and standing by him said: "I shall not have to reproach you, O Socrates, as I have others, with being enraged and cursing me when I announce to them, by order of the magistrates, that they must drink the poison; but during this time of your imprisonment I have learned to know you as the noblest and gentlest and best man of all that have ever come here, and so I am sure now that you will not be angry with me; for you know the real authors of this, and will blame them alone. And now—for you know what it is I have come to announce—farewell, and try to bear as best you may the inevitable." And upon this, bursting into tears, he turned and went away; and Socrates, looking after him, said:

"May it fare well with you also! We will do what you have bidden." And to us he added: "How courteous the man is! The whole time I have been here he has been constantly coming to see me, and has frequently talked to me, and shown himself to be the kindest of men; and see how feelingly he weeps for me now! But come, Crito, we must obey him. So let the poison be brought, if it is already mixed; if not, let the man mix it."

And Crito said: "But, Socrates, the sun, I think, is still upon the mountains, and has not yet gone down. Others, I know, have not taken the poison till very late, and have feasted and drunk right heartily, some even enjoying the company of their intimates, long after receiving the order. So do not hasten, for there is yet time."

But Socrates said: "It is very natural, Crito, that those of whom you speak should do this, for they think to gain thereby; but it is just as natural that I should not do so, for I do not think that, by drinking the poison a little later, I should gain any thing more than a laugh at my own expense, for being greedy of life and 'stingy when nothing is left.' So go and do as I desire."

At these words Crito motioned to the servant standing by, who then went out, and after some time came back with the man who was to give the poison, which he brought mixed in a cup. And Socrates, seeing the man, said:

"Well, my friend, I must ask you, since you have had experience in these matters, what I ought to do?"

"Nothing," said he, "but walk about after drinking until you feel a heaviness in your legs, and then, if you lie down, the poison will take effect of itself."

With this, he handed the cup to Socrates, who took it right cheerfully, O Echecrates, [E-kek′ra-tēs,] without tremor, or change of color or countenance, and, looking at the man from under his brows with that intent gaze peculiar to himself, said: "What say you to pouring a libation from this cup to one of the gods? Is it allowed or not?"

"We prepare, Socrates," answered he, "only just so much as we think is the right quantity to drink."

"I understand," said he; "but prayer to the gods is surely allowed, and must be made, that it may fare well with me on my journey yonder. For this, then, I pray, and so be it!"

Thus speaking, he put the cup to his lips, and right easily and blithely drank it off. Now most of us had until then been able to keep back our tears; but when we saw him drinking, and then that he had finished the draught, we could do so no longer. In spite of myself, my tears burst forth in floods, so that I covered my face and wept aloud, not for him assuredly, but for my own fate in being deprived of such a friend. Now Crito, even before I gave way, had not been able to restrain his tears, and so had moved away. But A-pol-lo-do′rus all along had not ceased to weep; and now, when he burst into loud sobs, there was not one of those present who was not overcome by his tears and distress, except Socrates himself. But he asked: "What are you doing, you strange people? My chief reason for sending away the women was, that we might be spared such discordance as this; for I have heard that a man ought to die in solemn stillness. So pray be composed, and restrain yourselves!"

On hearing this, we were ashamed, and forced back our tears. And he walked about until he said that he began to feel a heaviness in his legs, and then he lay down on his back, as he had been told to do. Thereupon the man who had given the poison, taking hold of him, examined from time to time his feet and legs, and then, pressing one foot hard, asked if he felt it, to which he answered, No; and after that, again his legs, and then still higher, showing us the while that he was getting cold and stiff. Then Socrates himself did the same, and said that by the time the poison had reached his heart he should be gone. And now he was cold nearly up to his middle, when, uncovering his face, for he had covered it up, he said—and these were his last words—"Crito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius. Pay the debt, and do not neglect it."

"It shall be done, Socrates," said he. "But think if you have nothing else to say."

There was no answer to this question; but after a moment Socrates stirred, and when the man uncovered him, we saw that his face was set.

Crito, on seeing this, closed his mouth and eyes. Such was the end, O Echecrates, of our friend, a man whom we may well call, of all men known to us of our day, the best, and besides the wisest and the most just.

What a gentle ending—told how gently, but with what power of pathos gently told—to that matchless pagan life! For such a case, shall we not at least "faintly trust the larger hope?"

Plato is so large a round that it needs much shifting of one's point of view to survey him fully. We have, for instance, not said a word about his doctrine, or his fancy—it possibly was no more than a fancy—of reminiscence so-called. This was one of his lemmas adduced in proof of human immortality. The process of learning, he thought, perhaps really was only a process of recollecting what we knew in a former state of being. Our birth was but a sleep and a forgetting, as Wordsworth sings it—a forgetting of what, known once, is afterward, upon occasion, through life, brought back to our remembrance. Wordsworth's Ode on Intimations of Immortality is to be read in the light of this Platonic speculation.

Do our readers, some of them, remember that striking expression of Tennyson in the In Memoriam,

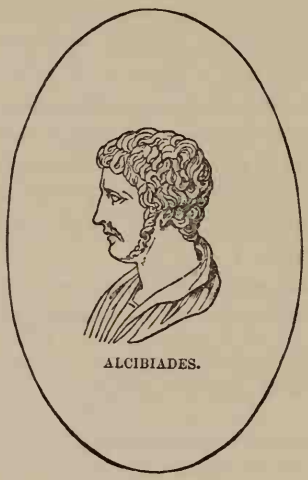
> Move upward, working out the beast,
> And let the ape and tiger die?

It is a Platonic conception, this of a lower nature couching within us, like a wild beast ready to tear and raven.

Platonism had a remarkable revival in Neo-Platonism (New Platonism) long after the great teacher's death. This was when Alexandria had become the transferred chief seat of Greek letters. Neo-Platonism exercised a powerful influence for many centuries on Christian theology. That influence is, perhaps, not yet spent. About a century ago, Thomas Taylor, known in literary history as "the Platonist,"

presented to the world the example of an Englishman, born so to speak out of due time and out of due place, swearing in the words of Plato.

That Zeus, if he had spoken Greek, would have spoken it like Plato, was the sentence of antiquity. Praise could not further go. Though some might be inclined to place Demosthenes before him, Plato will, no doubt, always remain in general consent the greatest prose writer of ancient Greece.



ALCIBIADES.

POETRY.

V.

ÆSCHYLUS.

From philosophy, treated as Plato treats philosophy, the transition is easy to poetry. Plato is a poet in prose.

It is not without reluctance that we have omitted Plato's successor, Aristotle, from our course. But we had reasons both to justify and to compel the omission. In the first place, the laws of space are peremptory. But, in the second place, and the third, Aristotle is rarely included in the ordinary college reading of Greek; and he is, though a great, a not popular, author. Besides, for a fourth reason—were there need of a fourth—we might add that Aristotle belongs but doubtfully to what is deemed the strictly classic age of Greek letters.

But we now offer a compromise, and gratify at once ourselves and our readers. Aristotle was not a poet, except in a few notable experiments of his genius; but he discussed poetry, and he discussed it philosophically. Between, therefore, that form of literature, namely, philosophy, which we have just dismissed, and that form of literature, namely, poetry, upon which, in the present chapter, we enter, the name of Aristotle will constitute a highly suitable term of connection.

ARISTOTLE.

Without saying more of Aristotle in general than that he was pupil to Plato, and that in influence on human thought he equaled and rivaled his master,

we give here, by way of introduction to our treatment of Greek poetry exemplified in the great tragic writers, some extracts bearing on the subject, from this eminent philosophical critic's treatise entitled Poetic. We begin with his celebrated definition of tragedy. Here it is, in awkwardly literal translation:

> Tragedy, therefore, is an imitation of a worthy or illustrious and perfect action, possessing magnitude, in pleasing language, using separately the several species of imitation in its parts, by men acting, and not through narration, through pity, and fear, effecting a purification from such like passions.

If this definition of tragedy seems to any among our readers less luminous than were to be wished, let such persons console themselves with the reflection that so it has seemed likewise to all students of Aristotle—except, perhaps, those students who love obscurity, and who would rather guess a puzzle than get a thought. However, compare the following form of translation, supplied by Mr. Symonds, in his work on the Greek poets. Mr. Symonds has ventured to be not so strictly literal, and he has succeeded in being more perspicuous—perhaps by being also less exact:

> Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is weighty, complete, and of a proper magnitude. It proceeds by action, and not by narration; and it effects, through pity and terror, a purgation of the like passions in the minds of the spectators.

Possibly the thing itself—Greek tragedy we mean—in specimens, will presently throw backward a welcome light for our readers on Aristotle's definition of the thing.

We go on with our extracts from Aristotle. In doing so, we happily are able to use a translation made beautifully clear by an art of Greek scholarship and of English expression that one would like to have had applied to the interpretation of the entire circle of Aristotle's works. We quote from Colonel Mure's "History of Greek Literature:"

In epic, as in tragic poetry, the subject must be dramatically treated, and concentrated around a single action, united and complete, with beginning, middle, and end, so as to come home to the apprehension with the effect of one entire living being. It is not sufficient, as in ordinary prose narrative, for the connection of different events under one head, that the mere time of their occurrence should be the same, while there may be, in other respects, no bond of union between them; or that they should be narrated in continuous succession, although in respect to their scope and object they may stand in no immediate relation to each other. Such, however, as we have already observed, is the method which almost all other poets have followed. The divine genius of Homer alone appears rising superior to all, in that he does not attempt to place before us the whole Trojan war; for that subject, although presenting (historically) a beginning, a middle, and an end, would, if treated in its integrity, either have formed an overgrown and unwieldly action, or, if restricted and condensed in the execution, would have been overcharged with matter. He prefers, therefore, selecting one part and diversifying it with numerous episodes. Other poets, indeed, also treat of one person, one time, and one action, but comprising many parts; as, for example, the authors of the Cyprid and Little Iliad. Hence the materials of the Iliad and Odyssey supply subject each for but one, or perhaps two tragedies. From the Cyprid, on the other hand, may be derived many; from the Little Iliad about eight or more; the Competition for the Arms, the Phil'oc-te'tes, Ne'op-tol'e-mus, Eu-ryp'y-lus, U-lys'ses Mendicant, La-cæ'na, Illii-persis, Apoplus, Si'non, Tro'a-des.

Once more:

A subject is one, not, as some suppose, from its merely relating to the affairs of one person, for an infinite number of adventures, offering in themselves no unity, might befall a single hero; and in the same way, one man might perform many exploits not capable of being combined into a single action. Hence all those poets are at fault who have composed Heracleids and Theseids, or other similar poems; for they imagine that because Hercules was one, their subject must also be one. But Homer, excellent as he is in other respects, has here also displayed his usual fine tact, whether acquired by art or bestowed by nature. For in composing an Odyssey he has not introduced all the eventful transactions of his hero's life . . . but those alone which have ranged themselves around that one action which we now call the Odyssey, and so also in regard to the Iliad.

With some innocent felicitation of ourselves and of our readers that we have thus, in omitting, not wholly omitted, the great name of Aristotle from our book, we take up now the subject proper of this chapter, Greek tragedy, as represented in Æschylus. Greek epic poetry, that is, Homer, has already been treated, in a previous volume of this series. There remain Greek tragedy, Greek comedy, Greek lyric and Greek idyllic poetry, to be described and exemplified in the present volume.

The first thing important in preparation for a right estimate of Greek tragedy, is to disabuse the mind of a certain very natural false prepossession. We English-speakers, we students of Shakespeare, have, of course, formed our ideas of what tragedy is from the examples familiar to us of Shakespeare's art in this line of literary production. Nothing more instinctive than that we should look to find a body of literature in Greek that has the same name, tragedy, having also the same character. Nothing more instinctive, and nothing more fallacious. Greek tragedy and English tragedy are two very distinct affairs. They both have their conventions, but their conventions are widely different. If you judge the Greek tragedy by the standard of the English, you will think very ill of the Greek. Conversely, if you judge the English tragedy by the standard of the Greek, you will think very ill of the English. But you will, in either case, commit a critical blunder and think very wrongly.

Regard Greek tragedy as an attempt to represent real life on the stage, and you will be right in pronouncing Greek tragedy very rude literary art, art entirely unworthy of the praise it has received. But Greek tragedy was no such attempt. Its material was not reality, and its aim was not to produce a life-like representation. We may state the difference between ancient tragedy and modern in a single antithetical sentence: Modern tragedy presents real life idealized; ancient tragedy presented an ideal life realized. The subjects

of Greek tragedy were myths in which nobody believed—that is, in which nobody believed as every body believes in the things of real life. The staple myths of Greek tragedy concerned heroes that were demigods. There was a certain tacit, quasi-religious—a conventional—acceptance of these myths, an acceptance of them sufficient to render them a suitable basis on which to impress whatever lesson of wisdom the tragic poet might wish to teach.

For Greek tragedy was a great institute of teaching. The motive to teach was quite in the ascendant over the motive to amuse. Whereas modern dramatic art seeks first to entertain, and then, if at all, to instruct and profit, the ancient tragedy reversed this order and was first didactic, and, after that, for the sake of didactics, diverting. Unless you understand this about Greek tragedy, you will be staggered in reading Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. You will wonder that these writers could ever have won the renown they enjoy. Remember, then, that whereas the modern tragedy aims to represent life, somewhat ideally, as life really is, and even makes its boast of not trying to enforce any moral, of being content with itself as art without seeking to make itself aught as ethics, of leaving the whole business of didactics to the sermon and the essay—Greek tragedy, on the other hand, had it for its chief purpose to teach. It represented action only, or mainly, for the sake of so teaching the more impressively. Milton, in the Paradise Regained, hits the truth exactly:

> Thence what the lofty, grave tragedians taught
> In chorus or iambick, teachers best
> Of moral prudence, with delight received
> In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
> Of fate and chance and change in human life,
> High actions and high passions best describing.

It is worthy of being noted, by the way, that thus the Greek example fails the modern devotees of art at a very

important point. Those who maintain the doctrine of art for art's sake, are fond of drawing precedent from ancient Greece. Art, they are in the habit of saying, is spoiled when it tries to preach. Look at Greece. How Greece delighted in beauty! Greece was wise enough to let beauty have its place, and stand alone sufficient to itself. Do not blame, so say these critics, do not blame Shakespeare for being simply an artist. Suffer him to represent life, and do not insist on his pointing a moral. But the Greek tragedians did just this forbidden thing. And who can be supposed to understand, better than did the ancient Greeks, the full rights of art as against the claims of ethics?

The Greek tragedies were represented by daylight in the open air, before assemblages that numbered their tens of thousands of spectators. The blue sky was roof to the immense amphitheatre, rocks, woods, and mountains, and temples of the gods, were the inclosing walls. The glorious sun was the common light of all their seeing. These circumstances made such illusion as is sought in the modern spectacle a thing quite out of the question for the antique stage. There was, indeed, anciently no attempt to produce the effect of such illusion. The actors wore masks on their faces, and buskins on their feet. Besides this, they wore a kind of wig designed to make them look taller, and dressed with padding designed to make them look larger. Such an accoutrement forbade any true acting. There was no play of feature visible to spectators, and there could be no free movement and gesture of the body. The whole spectacle partook of the character of something statuesque, something half superhuman. It was a series as if of tableaux—the figures fixed, immobile, marmoreal. The design was, indeed, to impose a kind of awe on the imagination, to subdue, to render docile—this, rather than to present a life-like scene.

Æschylus, born 525 B. C., was the true originator of Greek

tragedy. He found the stage occupied by a chorus of singers, whose lyric chant was the chief feature of the dramatic occasion. Apart from the chorus there was but one actor. This one actor diversified the monotony of the performance with a narrative monologue; or perhaps there was a dialogue carried on between him and the leader of the chorus. Æschylus introduced a second actor, and thereby transformed what was essentially lyric into dramatic—for now the choral part became secondary from having previously been principal—created in fact the tragedy. Changes were afterward incorporated, but tragedy remained for the Greeks substantially what Æschylus made it. The number of actors apart from the chorus was always very small. The history of classic Greek tragedy covered an exceedingly short space of time. The three masters, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, were in part mutual contemporaries. And these three are all the Greek tragedians that survive to us in their works.

Each one of the three was a fecund genius. Æschylus produced, it is said, no less than seventy tragedies. But Sophocles lived a long life productive to a late moment, and one hundred and thirteen tragedies are credited to him. Euripides was, in fruitfulness, exactly a mean between the two; he wrote ninety-two tragedies. But let not our readers be over hasty in counting themselves rich. Only seven tragedies of Æschylus, and only seven of Sophocles, are now extant. From Euripides we have seventeen.

Æschylus was born in an Attic village near Athens. He was of a noble family, and his character corresponded; for he was in spirit, high, haughty, and conservative. He fought at Marathon, and, with a brother of his, bore off a prize adjudged by his countrymen for valor. At Salamis, too, ten years later, he took part against the Persians. One of his tragedies, The Persians, treats the downfall of Xerxes. This piece, by the way, is unique in Greek tragedy for find-

ing the personages of its plot, not in myth, but in history. In compensation, there is an element of ghostly supernatural introduced—the spirit of Darius rising from the dead to teach the Persian grandees that so the gods chastise the insolence of Xerxes. In the interval between Marathon and Salamis, Æschylus wrote tragedies, and several times was crowned victor in the competitions arranged by the Athenians to take place among their rival tragic poets. But falling toward the last into disfavor with his fellow-citizens—as they in turn fell into disfavor with him—he retired to Syracuse, where, at the magnificent and munificent court of Hiero, he was content to pass the closing years of his life.

Æschylus was a kind of Michael Angelo in the largeness, in the ruggedness, and in the audacity of his genius—in the loftiness and pride of his character as well. Colossal, Titanic—are such adjectives as one wishes to use in describing Æschylus. He was the most aspiringly sublime of all the ancient poets. And yet he said of himself, in a self-disdaining way, which had, perhaps, more of pride than of meekness in it, that he had given in his tragedies only "fragments picked up from the mighty feasts of Homer." And true it is, that all Greek tragedy, including the part in it of Æschylus, dealt largely with the cycle of myths that centre about the Homeric tale of Troy.

In choosing from among the greatest of the extant works of Æschylus, we hesitate in almost hopeless balance between the Pro-me'theus Bound and the Agamemnon, for presentation to our readers. The Prometheus Bound has less intrinsic interest. It is besides, though in form a complete work, in fact a mere fragment, for it is one of three plays, belonging together in what is called a trilogy, of which the other two are lost. But, on the other hand, the Agamemnon would keep the reader revolving within much the same round of things as that with which Homer has already made him perhaps sufficiently familiar. This tragedy too belongs in a

triology consisting of the Agamemnon, which treats of that chieftain's return from Troy to be murdered by his wife Clytem-nes'tra; the Cho-eph'o-ri, (offerers of libations,) which represents Electra, Agamemnon's daughter, with her maidens, visiting her father's grave with votive gifts and rewarded by the return of her brother, Orestes, to slay the murderous mother and her paramour; and last the Eu-men'i-dēs, (Furies,) which shows Orestes accused by these beings, defended by Apollo, and absolved by A-the'ne. There are peculiar interests of English literary association belonging to the Prometheus, and these, together with the unique and lofty character of the tragedy itself, determine us, upon the whole, to make that our choice for the purpose of the present volume.

Prometheus was a mythical being of superhuman rank, who stole fire from heaven and brought it to men. For this offense against Zeus, he was condemned to be chained alive to a rocky cliff in the Cau'ca-sus. Prometheus himself is, of course, the chief personage in the action. The drama begins with the scene of the chaining. Conversation first takes place between He-phæs'tus (Vulcan) and two allegoric characters, Strength and Force, while these three rivet the captive divinity to the rock. This accomplished, Prometheus is visited in his solitude by a troop of nymphs, with whom he holds prolonged discourse. He expresses himself with unconquerable pride against Zeus, claiming to possess a secret not known to the monarch himself of Olympus, on which nevertheless the stability of that monarch's kingdom depends. While the haughty sufferer is in the height of his defiance of Zeus, the Thunderer sends a tempest, in the midst of which Prometheus disappears and the tragedy ends. Such, in brief, is the action of the poem.

The Prometheus Unbound is a lost work of Æschylus. Shelley has ventured after a certain sort to supply its place with a creation of his own. Of this modern attempt at com-

pleting of a great antique torso, we may, in due time, say something, but now forthwith to presentation of the torso itself.

The Prometheus Bound of Æschylus attracted the learning and the genius of Mrs. Browning to give it form in English verse. We shall chiefly use Mrs. Browning's translation here. It is a noble piece of work, admirable for scholarship in Greek, and, as English literature, marred only by those technical faults of execution, which Mrs. Browning, with all her resplendent gifts, never, except in her rarest felicities of mood, was fortunate enough wholly to escape. The original poem, like all the Greek tragedies, was written chiefly in iambics. Iambic blank verse, Mrs. Browning's choice for her task, is accordingly a fit mould of English translation. The parts, however, of the chorus, with certain lyric passages besides, are given by Æschylus (and like is the usage of all the Greek tragedians) in various other metres. Such exceptional portions of the tragedy Mrs. Browning appropriately renders in correspondingly varied English style, with added garnish of rhyme. The entire length of the tragedy is eleven hundred and fourteen Greek lines. Mrs. Browning's version makes about fourteen hundred lines in English.

The first scene opens with Strength speaking:

Strength. We reach the utmost limit of the earth,
The Scythian track, the desert without man,
And now, Hephæstus, thou must needs fulfill
The mandate of our Father, and with links
Indissoluble of adamantine chains,
Fasten against this beetling precipice
This guilty god. Because he filched away
Thine own bright flower, the glory of plastic fire,
And gifted mortals with it—such a sin
It doth behoove he expiate to the gods,
Learning to accept the empery of Zeus
And leave off his old trick of loving man.

Strength is a burly, fierce fellow. But Hephæstus shows some feeling:

Hephæstus. O Strength and Force, for you, our Zeus's will
Presents a deed for doing, no more!—but I,
I lack your daring, up this storm-rent chasm
To fix with violent hands a kindred god—
Howbeit necessity compels me so
That I must dare it—and our Zeus commands
With a most inevitable word. [*To Prometheus:*] Ho, thou!
High-thoughted son of Themis who is sage!
. . . . . .
Thou art adjudged to guard this joyless rock,
Erect, unslumbering, bending not the knee,
And many a cry and unavailing moan
To utter on the air. For Zeus is stern,
And new-made kings are cruel.

Force has nothing whatever to say. But Strength and Hephæstus keep up a colloquy while the work goes on. Hephæstus sighs:

I would some other hand
Were here to work it!

Whereto,

All work hath its pain
Except to rule the gods,

replies Strength, generalizing philosophically. He adds:

There is none free
Except King Zeus.

A few more similar exchanges of remark occur between the two, Strength meanwhile keeping a strict eye to the business in hand. Hephæstus is disposed to regard the task as now done, when Strength exclaims:

Still faster grapple him—
Wedge him in deeper—leave no inch to stir!
He's terrible for finding a way out
From the irremediable.

Hephæstus apparently tries to relieve the tension by putting on an indifferent air of compliance; but Strength is not to be cajoled:

Strength. Now, straight through the chest,
Take him and bite him with the clenching tooth
Of the adamantine wedge, and rivet him.

This is too much for Hephæstus, who bursts out—this time to Prometheus:

Alas, Prometheus, what thou sufferest here
I sorrow over.

Strength is not yet done with his relentless hounding on of Hephæstus to his task. But at length even Strength is satisfied. Prometheus is left to his solitude and chains and pains, with a fierce farewell speech from Strength, conceived as follows:

Methinks the Dæmons gave thee a wrong name,
Prometheus, which means Providence—because
Thou dost thyself need providence to see
Thy roll and ruin from the top of doom.

Prometheus, forsaken, soliloquizes:

O holy Æther, and swift wingéd Winds,
And river-wells, and laughter innumerous
Of yon sea-waves! Earth, mother of us all,
And all-viewing cyclic Sun, I cry on you—
Behold me a god, what I endure from gods!
Behold, with throe on throe,
How, wasted by this woe,
I wrestle down the myriad years of time!
Behold, how fast around me,
The new King of the happy ones sublime
Has flung the chain he forged, has shamed and bound me!
. . . . . .
Alas me! what a murmur and motion I hear
As of birds flying near!
And the air undersings
The light stroke of their wings—
And all life that approaches I wait for in fear.

"Laughter innumerous" is a literal rendering, not strikingly happy, of a famous expression in the original. The expression is itself a kind of dimple on the sea of the Æschylian verse, like a part of that very many-twinkling ripple of wave which it describes. The "all-beholding sun" of Bryant's Thanatopsis, our readers will observe, was in the Prometheus Bound of Æschylus before. In Shelley's Prometheus Unbound occurs the self-same phrase of Bryant. But Bryant was earlier by a year or two than Shelley.

What Prometheus heard was the approach of the winged sea-nymphs. These constitute a chorus. They chant in a lyrical strain:

> Fear nothing! our troop
> Floats lovingly up
> With a quick-oaring stroke
> Of wings steered to the rock,
> Having softened the soul of our father below!
> For the gales of swift-bearing have sent me a sound,
> And the clank of the iron, the malleted blow,
> Smote down the profound
> Of my caverns of old,
> And struck the red light in a blush from my brow—
> Till I sprang up unsandaled, in haste to behold,
> And rushed forth on my chariot of wings manifold.

The sea-nymphs and Prometheus chant responsively to each other through several pages of lofty lyrical dialogue. The sea-nymphs sympathize with the suffering god, and say hard things of Zeus. Prometheus on his part lets out dark hints of something that he knows, deeply concerning the interests of his conqueror and torturer. The sea-nymphs are tantalized. They beg Prometheus to tell them all about the matter. Prometheus seems to yield, and, beginning with retrospect, proceeds, interrupted from time to time by the nymphs, to the following purpose:

> When gods began with wrath,
> And war rose up between their starry brows,

Some choosing to cast Chronos from his throne
That Zeus might king it there, and some in haste
With opposite oaths that they would have no Zeus
To rule the gods forever—I, who brought
The counsel I thought meetest, could not move
The Titans, children of the Heaven and Earth,
What time, disdaining in their rugged souls
My subtle machinations, they assumed
It was an easy thing for force to take
The mastery of fate.

. . . . . .

Tartarus,
With its abysmal cloister of the Dark,
Because I gave that counsel, covers up
The antique Chronos and his siding hosts,
And, by that counsel helped, the king of gods
Hath recompensed me with these bitter pangs!
For kingship wears a cancer at the heart—
Distrust in friendship. Do ye also ask,
What crime it is for which he tortures me—
That shall be clear before you. When at first
He filled his father's throne, he instantly
Made various gifts of glory to the gods,
And dealt the empire out. Alone of men,
Of miserable men, he took no count,
But yearned to sweep their track off from the world,
And plant a newer race there. Not a god
Resisted such desire except myself!
I dared it! I drew mortals back to light,
From meditated ruin deep as hell!
For which wrong, I am bent down in these pangs
Dreadful to suffer, mournful to behold—
And I, who pitied man, am thought myself
Unworthy of pity—while I render out
Deep rhythms of anguish 'neath the harping hand
That strikes me thus!—a sight to shame your Zeus!

. . . . . .

Chorus. And didst thou sin
No more than so?

Prometheus. I did restrain besides
My mortals from premeditating death.—

Cho. How didst thou medicine the plague-fear of death?
Pro. I set blind hopes to inhabit in their house.
Cho. By that gift, thou didst help thy mortals well.
Pro. I gave them also,—fire.
Cho. And have they now,
Those creatures of a day, the red-eyed fire?
Pro. They have! and shall learn by it many arts.
Cho. And, truly, for such sins Zeus tortures thee,
And will remit no anguish? Is there set
No limit before thee to thine agony?
Pro. No other! only what seems good to Him.

. . . . . .

But mourn not ye for griefs
I bear to-day!—hear rather, dropping down
To the plain, how other woes creep on to me,
And learn the consummation of my doom.
Beseech you, nymphs, beseech you, grieve for me
Who now am grieving!—for Grief walks the earth,
And sits down at the foot of each by turns.

The sentiment with which the foregoing extract closes is highly characteristic of the grave and solemn genius of Æschylus. O-ce'an-us (Ocean-god) now arrives, and joins the company of sympathizers with Prometheus. Prometheus, greeting him, flings out high words against Zeus. Oceanus is worldly-wise, and he counsels the captive thriftily. He proposes a plan of intervention with Zeus on behalf of the sufferer:

Prometheus, I behold—and I would fain
Exhort thee, though already subtle enough,
To a better wisdom. Titan, know thyself,
And take new softness to thy manners since
A new king rules the gods.

. . . . . .

Beseech thee, use me then
For counsel! do not spurn against the pricks—
Seeing that who reigns, reigns by cruelty
Instead of right. And now, I go from hence,
And will endeavor if a power of mine
Can break thy fetters through. For thee—be calm,

> And smooth thy words from passion. Knowest thou not
> Of perfect knowledge, thou who knowest too much,
> That where the tongue wags, ruin never lags?

But Prometheus says: 'No, there is no hope. Zeus is not to be entreated. You will only bring trouble on yourself.' The speech of Prometheus is, however, too magnificent not to be spread out somewhat at large. In it he gives glimpses, in powerful description, of that ancient war of the Giants against Zeus, which resulted in overthrow and punishment to the rebel Titans. Of these, Atlas was one—"my brother Atlas," Prometheus calls him. Atlas was condemned to bear up the heaven and the earth upon his shoulders. Hundred-headed Typhon the fell was another rebel overthrown. He was sentenced to heave and toss uneasily under Ætna. But here is Titan Æschylus himself upon the Titans, fitly presented in the truly Titanic translation of Mrs. Browning. Prometheus says to Oceanus:

> Take rest,
> And keep thyself from evil. If I grieve,
> I do not therefore wish to multiply
> The griefs of others. Verily, not so!
> For still my brother's doom doth vex my soul—
> My brother Atlas, standing in the west,
> Shouldering the column of the heaven and earth,
> A difficult burden! I have also seen,
> And pitied as I saw, the earth-born one,
> The inhabitant of old Cilician caves,
> The great war-monster of the hundred heads,
> (All taken and bowed beneath the violent Hand,)
> Typhon the fierce, who did resist the gods,
> And, hissing slaughter from his dreadful jaws,
> Flash out ferocious glory from his eyes,
> As if to storm the throne of Zeus! Whereat,
> The sleepless arrow of Zeus flew straight at him—
> The headlong bolt of thunder breathing flame,
> And struck him downward from his eminence
> Of exultation! Through the very soul
> It struck him, and his strength was withered up

To ashes, thunder-blasted. Now, he lies
A helpless trunk supinely, at full length
Beside the strait of ocean, spurred into
By roots of Ætna—high upon whose tops
Hephæstus sits and strikes the flashing ore.
From thence the rivers of fire shall burst away
Hereafter, and devour with savage jaws
The equal plains of fruitful Sicily,
Such passion he shall boil back in hot darts
Of an insatiate fury and sough of flame,
Fallen Typhon—howsoever struck and charred
By Zeus's bolted thunder! But for thee,
Thou art not so unlearned as to need
My teaching—let thy knowledge save thyself.
I quaff the full cup of a present doom,
And wait till Zeus hath quenched his will in wrath.

Oceanus. Prometheus, art thou ignorant of this,
That words do medicine anger?

Prometheus. If the word
With seasonable softness touch the soul,
And, where the parts are ulcerous, sear them not
By any rudeness.

The "words do medicine anger," of Æschylus, recalls that of Milton:

Apt words have power to suage
The tumors of a troubled mind.

Oceanus, undissuaded by Prometheus, speeds him off to see what he may be able to effect for the captive. The nymphs intervene with strophe and antistrophe of soothing sympathy, one group of the chorus answering another, and then Prometheus resumes his part:

Beseech you, think not I am silent thus
Through pride or scorn! I only gnaw my heart
With meditation, seeing myself so wronged.
For so—their honors to these new-made gods,
What other gave but I, and dealt them out
With distribution? Ay—but here I am dumb!
For here, I should repeat your knowledge to you,

If I spake aught. List rather to the deeds
I did for mortals!—how, being fools before,
I made them wise and true in aim of soul.
And let me tell you—not as taunting men,
But teaching you the intention of my gifts,
How, first beholding, they beheld in vain,
And hearing, heard not, but, like shapes in dreams,
Mixed all things wildly down the tedious time,
Nor knew to build a house against the sun
With wicketed sides, nor any woodcraft knew,
But lived, like silly ants, beneath the ground
In hollow caves unsunned. There, came to them
No steadfast sign of winter, nor of spring
Flower-perfumed, nor of summer full of fruit,
But blindly and lawlessly they did all things,
Until I taught them how the stars do rise
And set in mystery, and devised for them
Number, the inducer of philosophies,
The synthesis of Letters, and besides,
The artificer of all things, Memory,
That sweet Muse-mother. I was first to yoke
The servile beasts in couples, carrying
An heirdom of man's burdens on their backs.
I joined to chariots, steeds, that love the bit
They champ at—the chief pomp of golden ease!
And none but I originated ships,
The seaman's chariots, wandering on the brine
With linen wings. And I—O, miserable!—
Who did devise for mortals all these arts,
Have no device left now to save myself
From the woe I suffer.

The chorus are wise sympathizers. They let grief have its way. By the simple echoing back, in chime with him, of what Prometheus says, they console him better than by any intrusion of advice they could:

Most unseemly woe
Thou sufferest, and dost stagger from the sense,
Bewildered! Like a bad leech falling sick
Thou art faint of soul, and canst not find the drugs
Required to save thyself.

This unlocks Prometheus's heart still wider, and disburdens him of more:

> Hearken the rest,
> And marvel further—what more arts and means
> I did invent—this greatest!—if a man
> Fell sick, there was no cure, nor esculent,
> Nor chrism, nor liquid, but for lack of drugs
> Men pined and wasted, till I showed them all
> Those mixtures of emollient remedies
> Whereby they might be rescued from disease.
> I fixed the various rules of mantic art,
> Discerned the vision from the common dream,
> Instructed them in vocal auguries
> Hard to interpret, and defined as plain
> The way-side omens—flights of crook-clawed birds—
> Showed which are, by their nature, fortunate,
> And which not so, and what the food of each,
> And what the hates, affections, social needs,
> Of all to one another—taught what sign
> Of visceral lightness, colored to a shade,
> May charm the genial gods, and what fair spots
> Commend the lung and liver. Burning so
> The limbs encased in fat, and the long chine,
> I led my mortals on to an art abstruse,
> And cleared their eyes to the image in the fire,
> Erst filmed in dark. Enough said now of this.
> For the other helps of man hid underground,
> The iron and the brass, silver and gold,
> Can any dare affirm he found them out
> Before me? none, I know! unless he choose
> To lie in his vaunt. In one word learn the whole—
> That all arts came to mortals from Prometheus.

Prometheus, our readers will note, broaches that view of human history which makes man to have begun in savagery and to have worked his way gradually up to civilization. The evolutionists may elect Prometheus to posthumous honorary membership in their guild. From interchange following between Prometheus and the chorus, it appears that Zeus himself is bound by necessity. The nymphs in chorus

wish themselves security against the dreadful wrath of Zeus, and mourn the contrast between Prometheus's present lot and the auspices that smiled about his bridal bed, they singing then and there a hymeneal chant.

But here enters a strange new personage into the action. It is no other than hapless I'o, a mortal maiden loved by Zeus and for that reason tormented of Herê, Zeus's wife. Heré has revengefully changed Io into a heifer, and she now drives her victim ever from land to land helpless and mad under the sting of a gadfly. Io, suffering and forlorn under her own shameful transformation, is arrested by the encounter of grief in Prometheus greater than her own. She begs to know from him why he is in that hard case, and, having been told briefly, asks further what still awaits herself. Prometheus, replying, foretells in part the wanderings she must still accomplish—this at great length, and with many proper names recounted which give here a Miltonic look to Mrs. Browning's page. It is all very fine, but the interest of it is for us moderns remote and cold. We pass it, noting only a curious etymology that Æschylus quite unexpectedly pauses on his way to give. Poor Io, heifer-maid, must swim "the strait Mæotis." This crossing of that water shall give the strait a name forever, "Bosphorus," or "Bosporos"—literally, as Mrs. Browning translates, "the horned one's road." (Let the reader compare English Ox-ford.)

Prometheus not having yet told her all that lay before her, Io was immeasurably distressed to hear even such part of her predestined woes. To her, asking why she had not better at once dash herself down the rocks and make an end, Prometheus says, 'For me is no release from ills in death. I must suffer till Zeus cease to reign.' 'And will Zeus ever cease to reign?' eagerly asks Io; 'How?' 'Through one, at a remove of thirteen generations, born of you,' replies Prometheus; and this is the connection in fate between the two which has justified the introduction of Io into the

drama. Only tantalized with this unsatisfying glimpse of the future, Io begs to know more. Prometheus offers her an option. She shall either hear the full measure of her own appointed sorrows, or she shall hear how he himself, Prometheus, is at length to be released. The chorus interposes with, 'Tell to her the one and to me the other.' And Prometheus complies. He is highly explicit in his itinerary of poor Io's future wanderings; but when he comes to the matter of his own deliverance he is oracularly obscure. His deliverer will be a personage designated only by a pronoun —it will be a certain HE. That is the sense of the passage.

Io hereupon falls into a fresh paroxysm of her anguish, and with a frenzied outcry in lyrical numbers dashes out of the scene. The chorus, in strophe, antistrophe, and epode, chant their sentiments in view of what they have seen and heard. These lyrical strains we transfer to our pages. They well exemplify, first, the dithyrambic fury of Æschylus in his lyrical strains, and, secondly, the style of didactic reflection through which the chorus in Greek tragedy communicated its lessons of practical wisdom:

Io.

Eleleu, eleleu!
How the spasm and the pain
And the fire on the brain
Strike, burning me through!
How the sting of the curse, all aflame as it flew,
Pricks me onward again!
How my heart, in its terror, is spurning my breast,
And my eyes, like the wheels of a chariot, roll round!
I am whirled from my course, to the east, to the west,
In the whirlwind of phrensy all madly inwound—
And my mouth is unbridled for anguish and hate,
And my words beat in vain, in wild storms of unrest,
On the sea of my desolate fate.

Chorus—strophe.

O, wise was he, O, wise was he,
Who first within his spirit knew,

And with his tongue declared it true,
That love comes best that comes unto
The equal of degree!
And that the poor and that the low
Should seek no love from those above
Whose souls are fluttered with the flow
Of airs about their golden height,
Or proud because they see arow
Ancestral crowns of light.

Antistrophe.

O, never, never, may ye, Fates,
Behold me with your awful eyes
Lift mine too fondly up the skies
Where Zeus upon the purple waits!
Nor let me step too near—too near—
To any suitor bright from heaven!
Because I see—because I fear
This loveless maiden vexed and laden
By this fell curse of Here, driven
On wanderings dread and drear.

Epode.

Nay, grant an equal troth instead
Of nuptial love, to bind me by!
It will not hurt—I shall not dread
To meet it in reply.
But let not love from those above
Revert and fix me, as I said,
With that inevitable Eye!
I have no sword to fight that fight—
I have no strength to tread that path—
I know not if my nature hath
The power to bear—I cannot see
Whither, from Zeus's infinite,
I have the power to flee.

What follows is a fine bit of audacity from Prometheus in menacing defiance of Zeus. Mrs. Browning rises equal to the sublimity of her original—as Prometheus dares and flouts the thunder of the Thunderer in this high fashion:

Now, therefore, let him sit
And brave the imminent doom, and fix his fate
On his supernal noises, hurtling on
With restless hand, the bolt that breathes out fire—
For these things shall not help him, none of them,
Nor hinder his perdition when he falls
To shame, and lower than patience. Such a foe
He doth himself prepare against himself,
A wonder of unconquerable Hate,
An organizer of sublimer fire
Than glares in lightnings, and of grander sound
Than aught the thunder rolls, outthundering it,
With power to shatter in Poseidon's fist
The trident-spear, which, while it plagues the sea,
Doth shake the shores around it. Ay, and Zeus,
Precipitated thus, shall learn at length
The difference betwixt rule and servitude.

The chorus, true to the character of choruses—ever wise, though sometimes commonplace (but is not real wisdom generally commonplace ?)—counsels self-restraint to Prometheus. Prometheus is only goaded to fiercer scorn thereby. He bursts out as follows:

Reverence thou,
Adore thou, flatter thou, whomever reigns,
Whenever reigning ! but for me, your Zeus
Is less than nothing. Let him act and reign
His brief hour out according to his will—
He will not, therefore, rule the gods too long.
But, lo ! I see that courier-god of Zeus,
That new-made menial of the new-crowned king.
He doubtless comes to announce to us something new.

Hermes, messenger of Zeus, comes requiring, from the king of gods and men, that Prometheus speak plainly out his boasted secret. Prometheus answers proudly, and concludes:

Do I seem
To tremble and quail before your modern gods?
Far be it from me ! For thyself, depart,

Re-tread thy steps in haste. To all thou hast asked,
I answer nothing.

Altercation ensues hetween Hermes and Prometheus, Prometheus speaking with a rebellious loftiness and pride worthy of Milton's Satan. Here, indeed, is as much true parallel for the first books of the Paradise Lost, as any thing in literature could furnish. We add a further specimen. Prometheus says to Hermes:

No torture from his hand
Nor any machination in the world
Shall force mine utterance, ere he loose, himself,
These cankerous fetters from me! For the rest,
Let him now hurl his blanching lightnings down,
And with his white-winged snows and mutterings deep
Of subterranean thunders, mix all things,
Confound them in disorder. None of this
Shall bend my sturdy will, and make me speak
The name of his dethroner who shall come.

Hermes is exasperatingly calm and advisory. But he threatens withal:

Absolute will disjoined
From perfect mind is worse than weak. Behold,
Unless my words persuade thee, what a blast
And whirlwind of inevitable woe
Must sweep persuasion through thee. For at first
The Father will split up this jut of rock
With the great thunder and the bolted flame,
And hide thy body where a hinge of stone
Shall catch it like an arm;—and when thou hast passed
A long black time within, thou shalt come out
To front the sun while Zeus's winged hound,
The strong carnivorous eagle, shall wheel down
To meet thee, self-called to a daily feast,
And set his fierce beak in thee, and tear off
The long rags of thy flesh, and batten deep
Upon thy dusky liver. Do not look
For any end moreover to this curse,
Or ere some god appear, to accept thy pangs
On his own head vicarious, and descend

With unreluctant step the darks of hell
And gloomy abysses around Tartarus.

The chorus chimes in with Hermes, in the customary strain of choric worldly-wisdom:

Our Hermes suits his reasons to the times;
At least I think so—since he bids thee drop
Self-will for prudent counsel. Yield to him!
When the wise err, their wisdom makes their shame.

Prometheus abides stout and defiant:

Let the locks of the lightning, all bristling and whitening,
Flash, coiling me round,
While the æther goes surging 'neath thunder and scourging
Of wild winds unbound!
Let the blast of the firmament whirl from its place
The earth rooted below,
And the brine of the ocean, in rapid emotion,
Be it driven in the face
Of the stars up in heaven, as they walk to and fro!
Let him hurl me anon, into Tartarus—on—
To the blackest degree,
With Necessity's vortices strangling me down;
But he cannot join death to a fate meant for *me!*

Hermes advises the sea-nymphs to withdraw and leave the maniac to his fate, lest they, too, be involved in his impending ruin. And now one is reminded of the title to a chapter in The Mill on the Floss: "Showing that Old Acquaintances are Capable of Surprising Us." For the chorus most unexpectedly replies with spirit, nay, with magnificent heroism, to the counsel of Hermes. The sea-nymphs decide to share, with the high-hearted sufferer, his dark and dreadful fate:

Chorus. Change thy speech for another, thy thought for a new
If to move me and teach me, indeed be thy care!
For thy words swerve so far from the loyal and true,
That the thunder of Zeus seems more easy to bear.
How! couldst teach me to venture such vileness? behold!
I choose, with this victim, this anguish foretold!

I recoil from the traitor in hate and disdain—
And I know that the curse of the treason is worse
Than the pang of the chain.

The tragedy ends with the following sublime salutation and welcome, from Prometheus, of his doom:

Ay! in act, now—in word, now, no more,
Earth is rocking in space!
And the thunders crash up with a roar upon roar,
And the eddying lightnings flash fire in my face,
And the whirlwinds are whirling the dust round and round,
And the blasts of the winds universal leap free
And blow each upon each with a passion of sound,
And æther goes mingling in storm with the sea!
Such a curse on my head, in a manifest dread,
From the hand of your Zeus has been hurtled along.
O, my mother's fair glory! O, Æther, enringing,
All eyes with the sweet common light of thy bringing,
Dost see how I suffer this wrong?

Our readers must feel that there is height here of the intellectually and the morally sublime. Certainly nothing in non-inspired literature is worthier than the Prometheus Bound of Æschylus to claim kinship, in elevation, in majesty, in power, with the Paradise Lost of Milton. It seems clear that Milton's conception of Satan owes not a little to inspiration received from the kindred creation of Prometheus, the Titan protagonist in this great tragedy of Æschylus.

For a modernizing allegorical intepretation of the Prometheus Bound, our readers will study with pleasure a poem of Mr. Lowell's, written in that poet's earlier, simpler, better, though, it must be confessed, also less vigorous, vein, entitled "Prometheus"—a poem fine enough to have deserved being made many times finer by compression to a quarter of its actual length. The Promethean prophecy of one born of woman destined to overthrow the empire of Zeus, is capable of a striking interpretation, identifying the predicted one with Jesus of Nazareth.

It is not to be confidently assumed that the true final teaching of Æschylus, in his tragical work, was hostile to Zeus. On the contrary, the complementary parts of the Promethean trilogy are, from fragments preserved in dispersion through other literature, judged to have represented Prometheus as, in the event, coming to terms with his conqueror. Shelley thought this a feeble and disappointing close to a commencement so magnificent and so promising. But we had better not so decide without stronger reason than, in the absence of the parts missing, we can possibly possess. At any rate, Æschylus was religious rather than skeptical, and he meant in his tragedies to help piety instead of helping irreverence. Shelley himself, had he lived to be an older, might have come to be also a more believing, man. His "Prometheus Unbound" was the work of his eager and inexperienced youth. Professor W. S. Tyler has a volume, entitled "Theology of the Greek Poets," written in a nobly Christian, as well as an enlightened scholar-like, spirit, that strikingly illustrates the resemblance and the contrast existing between Revelation and the hints of natural or traditional religion scattered through Greek poetry. His remarks on the tragedians, especially Æschylus, will repay careful attention.

The sentiment naturally inspired in the sympathetic breast by the spectacle of enduring and defying Prometheus is very well expressed by the Ettrick Shepherd in that strange compound of the noble and the base, the Noctes Ambrosianæ of Christopher North. The quaint Scottish dialect adds a pleasant piquancy to the expression: "Ane amaist fears to pity him, lest we wrang fortitude sae majestical."

In conclusion, it may be said generally of Æschylus, that his chief fault was, as the French would express it, the fault of his chief virtue. Grandeur, sublimity, was the great characteristic of his genius. But he was sometimes grandiose when he meant to be grand, sometimes simply swelling when

he meant to be sublime. Lucian found herein his opportunity with Æschylus. In his Prometheus (or Caucasus) he travesties the great master, in his characteristic irreverent, but irresistibly amusing style. That Lucian could not make Æschylus wholly ridiculous, is proof enough that Æschylus had an indestructible element in him of genuineness.

VI.

SOPHOCLES.

THE proud and perhaps scornful spirit of Æschylus had to brook the mortification of being supplanted in fashion and favor by a younger rival. Sophocles came up, a smiling youth, and, with what to us half seems an easy and unconscious grace, took off for himself the crown of supremacy in tragic verse that had been wont to sit on the brow of Æschylus. Sophocles lived long to enjoy his triumphs, frequently but not quite uninterruptedly repeated throughout a productive career almost as remarkably protracted as was that of the painter Titian—two pictures by whom are displayed in Venice side by side, one done in the twentieth, and the other in the ninetieth, year of the artist's age. Sophocles, an old man, was accused of doting, by litigants who through this charge would invalidate before the law some transaction of his prejudicial to their interest. The poet triumphantly confuted his accusers by reciting a new choric ode of his (presently to be

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shown our readers) in praise of the beauties of Colonus. The authenticated incidents of his life are not many, and the few are not important. He was richly and variously gifted—with personal charm, with happy temperament, with popular favor, with good fortune of almost every sort, as, beyond all these things, with an exquisite taste and a beautiful genius. "He has died well, having suffered no evil," was a poet's sentence on Sophocles, pronounced not long after his decease. Aristophanes, who could not be bitter enough toward Euripides, represents Sophocles abiding in the under world, aloof from strife, "gentle there, even as he was gentle here." It would seem, however, that the virtue of Sophocles was a Greek virtue, that is—alas, to be obliged to say it!—a virtue not intolerant of unchaste life.

Fortunately for the fame of this great poet, he survives in seven of his masterpieces. Among these, however—masterpieces all—it is, on the whole, not difficult to make our present choice. We must make our readers acquainted with the Œd'i-pus Ty-ran'nus, or Œdipus the King. This tragedy is considered, by perhaps the majority of qualified critics to be not only the best work of Sophocles, but the "bright consummate flower" of all Greek tragedy.

For our translator we select Professor Campbell. Mr. E. H. Plump'tre has produced excellent metrical versions of both Sophocles and Æschylus. There is perhaps little to choose in point of scholarship between his work and the work of the translator upon whom we decide chiefly to depend in our reproduction of Sophocles. In his English construction, however, Mr. Plumptre is somewhat less easy to follow than his rival. A third translator of Sophocles we shall have occasion to speak of presently. Professor Lewis Campbell is Professor of Greek in the University of St. Andrew's, in Glasgow. He is, possibly, less a natural poet than an accomplished Greek scholar; but he versifies well, and our readers may certainly trust his affectionate, yet sufficiently independ-

ent, fidelity to his original. We begin with the argument prefixed to the play by Mr. Campbell:

"La'i-us, the descendant of Cadmus, and king of Thebes (or Thebè,) had been told by an oracle that, if a son were born to him by his wife Jocasta, the boy would be his father's death.

"Under such auspices, Œdipus was born, and to elude the prophecy was exposed by his parents on Mount Cith-æ'-ron. But he was saved by a compassionate shepherd and became the adopted son of Pol'y-bus, king of Corinth. When he grew up he was troubled by a rumor that he was not his father's son. He went to consult the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, and was told—not of his origin but of his destiny—that he should be guilty of parricide and incest.

"He was too horror-stricken to return to Corinth, and as he traveled the other way, he met Laius going from Thebes to Delphi. The travelers quarreled, and the son killed his father, but knew not whom he had slain. He went onward till he came near Thebes, where the Sphinx was making havoc of the noblest citizens. Œdipus solved her riddle and overcame her, and, as Laius did not return, was rewarded with the regal sceptre,—and with the hand of the queen.

"He reigned nobly and prosperously, and lived happily with Jocasta, by whom he had four children.

"But after some years a plague descended on the people, and Apollo, on being inquired of, answered that it was for Laius's death. The act of regicide must be avenged. Œdipus undertakes the task of discovering the murderer,—and in the same act discovers his own birth, and the fulfillment of both the former oracles.

"Jocasta hangs herself, and Œdipus, in his despair, puts out his eyes."

Our readers will be curious to see the text of the Sphinx's celebrated riddle. We present it here, versified, as we find it in Mr. Plumptre's volume of Sophocles translated:

There lives upon earth a being, two-footed, yea, and with four feet,
Yea, and with three feet, too, yet his voice continues unchanging ;
And, lo ! of all things that move in earth, in heaven, or in ocean,
He only changes his nature, and yet when on most feet he walketh
Then is the speed of his limbs most weak and utterly powerless.

The following is the solution furnished by Œdipus. Again we make the transfer from Mr. Plumptre's volume :

Hear thou against thy will, thou dark-winged Muse of the slaughtered,
Hear from my lips the end, bringing a close to thy crime :
Man is it thou hast described, who, when on earth he appeareth,
First as a babe from the womb, four-footed creeps on his way,
Then when old age cometh on, and the burden of years weighs full heavy,
Bending his shoulders and neck, as a third foot useth his staff.

It is the object of Sophocles to present at first the protagonist of his play, King Œdipus, in the character of a man supremely prosperous and happy. The prosperity and the happiness are, however, not real. This the spectators of the play, familiar beforehand with the story of Œdipus, perfectly understand. Their interest in the spectacle is not the interest of persons awaiting with curiosity an unforeseen development of plot. It is rather the interest of observers who, themselves in the secret of the future, contemplate the conduct of persons involved in a destiny of which they, the observed, are unaware.

We may omit the opening scene, in which the sympathies of the spectators are by the poet skillfully engaged on behalf of King Œdipus unconsciously in the toils of fate. Œdipus seems a good ruler established in the well-deserved affection of his people. These, represented by a priest and a train of suppliants, wait on him, with touching trust—as of children—to have him devise for them a relief from the plague under which they suffer. They thus awaiting, Creon, brother-in-law to the king, arrives with a response from Apollo. Apollo directed that inquisition be made for the murderers of King Laius, predecessor to Œdipus, and con-

dign punishment be inflicted upon them. Œdipus, ill knowing, what however the spectators of the tragedy always well knew, that now the dreadful meshes of destiny were beginning to be woven about the feet of the hapless king—Œdipus, we say, with zeal undertook to hunt the murderers out. The chorus entering here chant their part in concert. It is a mournful song of plaint and of appeal for deliverance from the plague. Œdipus comes in again, while this wail is lifted, and replies reassuringly. His royal mandate he issues solemnly as follows: (the spectators shudder with pity and horror, considering how, in the terms of this edict, unconciously the king is denouncing himself:)

> Whoever is the author of the deed,
> I here prohibit all within this realm
> Whereof I wield the sovereignty and sway,
> To admit him to their doors or speak with him
> Or share with him in vow or sacrifice
> Or lustral rite. All men shall thrust him forth,
> Our dark pollution, so to me revealed
> By this day's oracle from Pytho's cell.
> Thus firm is mine allegiance to the God
> And your dead sovereign in this holy war.

And now the king, blindfold to fate, imprecates—in form as upon another—upon himself, a fearful curse:

> Now on the murderer, whether he lurk
> In lonely guilt, or with a numerous band,
> I here pronounce this curse: let his crushed life
> Perish forlorn in hopeless misery.
> Next, I pray Heaven, should he or they be housed
> With my own knowledge in my home, that I
> May suffer all I imprecate on them.

A colloquy ensues between Œdipus and the chorus, most artfully contrived by Sophocles to increase the tension of the situation. A certain blind prophet, Tei-re'si-as by name—Milton mentions him for parallel with himself in the Paradise Lost—is to be invoked. This prophet is reluctant

to appear, knowing in himself what a burden he bears of doom for the king. Our readers must see for themselves how much skill is displayed by Sophocles in the art of suspending progress in order to prolong for spectators their luxury of horror in watching the sure-footed slow approach of Nem′e-sis to the still unconscious victim. The chorus, a company of Theban elders, begin—speaking, observe, collectively in the singular number—by purging themselves:

Under the shadow of thy curse, my lord,
I will speak. I slew him not, nor can I show
The man who slew. Phœbus, who gave the word,
Should name the criminal.
Œd. Thy thought is just,
But man may not compel the gods.
Ch. Again,
That failing, I perceive a second way.
Œd. Were it a third, spare not to speak it forth.
Ch. I know of one alone whose royal mind
Sees all King Phœbus sees—Teiresias,—he
Infallibly would guide us in this search.
Œd. That doth not count among my deeds undone.
By Creon's counsel I have sent twice o'er
To seek him, and I muse at his delay.
Ch. The rumor that remains is old and dim.
Œd. What rumor? Let no tale be left untried.
Ch. 'Twas said he perished by some wandering band.
Œd. But the one witness is removed from ken.
Ch. Well, if the man be capable of fear,
He will not stay when he hath heard thy curse.
Œd. Words have no terror for the soul that dares
Such deeds.
Ch. Yet is there one who shall convict him,
For see where now they lead the holy seer,
Whom sacred Truth inspires alone of men.

The situation grows gradually more intense throughout the conversation that now follows between the king and the seer. The king speaks first in the character of a gracious sovereign paying just tribute, that ought to be appreciated, to a venerable prophet. The stubborn reticence of the prophet

—reticence inspired, the spectator understood how, but the king did not know or guess—at last irritated Œdipus. The baffled monarch begins to divine the reason for the strange behavior of Teiresias—but to divine it utterly wrong. He suspects his brother-in-law, Creon, of designs against himself. Creon, Œdipus thinks, has set Teiresias on to engender among the people distrust of their king. But the dialogue is too important not to be shown somewhat at large:

Œd. O thou whose universal thought surveys
All knowledge and all mysteries, in heaven
And on the earth beneath, thy mind perceives,
Teiresias, though thine outward eye be dark,
What plague is wasting Thebe, who in thee,
Great sir, finds her one saviour, her sole guide.
. . . . . .
We cast ourselves on thee: and beautiful
It is to use the power one hath for good.

Tei. Ah! terrible is knowledge to the man
Whom knowledge profits not. This well I knew,
But had forgotten. Else had I ne'er come hither.

Œd. Why dost thou bring a mind so full of gloom?

Tei. Let me go home. Thy part and mine to-day
Will best be borne, if thou obey me there.

Œd. Rebellious and ungrateful! to deprive
The state that reared thee of thine utterance now.

Tei. Thy speech, I see, is crossing thine intent;
And I would shield me from the like mishap.

Œd. Nay, if thou knowest, turn thee not away:
Lo, all these suppliants are entreating thee!

Tei. Yea, for ye all are blind. Never will I
Utter the sound that shall reveal thine evil.

Œd. So, then, thou hast the knowledge of the crime
And wilt not tell, but rather wouldst betray
This people, and destroy thy fatherland!

Tei. You press me to no purpose. I'll not pain
Thee, nor myself. Thou wilt hear nought from me.

Œd. How? Miscreant! thy stubbornness would rouse
Wrath in a breast of stone. Wilt thou still keep
That silent, hard, impenetrable mien?

Tei. You censure me for my harsh mood. Your own
Dwells unsuspected with you. Me you blame!
Œd. Who can be mild and gentle, when thou speakest
Such words to mock this people?
Tei. It will come:
Although I bury it in silence here.
Œd. Must not the king be told of what will come?
Tei. No word from me. At this, an if thou wilt,
Rage to the height of passionate vehemence.
Œd. Ay, and my passion shall declare my thought.
'Tis clear to me as daylight, thou hast been
The arch-plotter of this deed; yea, thou hast done
All but the actual blow. Hadst thou thy sight,
I would pronounce thee the sole murderer.
Tei. Ay, sayst thou so?—I charge thee to abide
By that thou hast proclaimed; and from this hour
Speak not to any Theban nor to me.
Thou art the vile polluter of the land.
Œd. O void of shame! What wickedness is this?
What power will give thee refuge for such guilt?
Tei. The might of truth is scatheless. I am free.
Œd. Whence gottest thou this truth? Not from thine art.
Tei. From thee, whose rage impelled my backward tongue.
Œd. Say it once more, that I may know the drift.
Tei. Was it so dark? Or wouldst thou tempt my voice?
Œd. I cannot say 'twas clear. Speak it again.
Tei. I say thou art the murderer whom thou seekest.
Œd. Again that baleful word! But thou shalt rue.
Tei. Shall I speak something more, to feed thy wrath?
Œd. All is but idleness. Say what thou wilt.
Tei. I tell thee thou art living unawares
In shameful commerce with thy near'st of blood,
Ignorant of the abyss wherein thou liest.
Œd. Mean'st thou to triumph in offending still?
Tei. Yes, if the might of truth be any thing.
Œd. It is, for other men, but not for thee,
Blind as thou art in eyes and ears and mind.
Tei. O miserable reproach, which all who now
Behold thee, soon shall thunder forth on thee!
Œd. Nursed in unbroken night, thou canst not harm,
Or me, or any man who seeth the day.

Tei. No, not from me proceeds thy fall; the God,
Who cares for this, is able to perform it.
Œd. Came this device from Creon or thyself?
Tei. Not Creon: thou art thy sole enemy.
Œd. O wealth and sovereign power and high success
Attained through wisdom and admired of men,
What boundless jealousies environ you!
. . . . . .
But for thy reverend look
Thou hadst atoned thy trespass on the spot!

The chorus intervene with the soft answer which turns away wrath:

Ch. Your friends would humbly deprecate the wrath
That sounds both in your speech, my lord, and his.
That is not what we need, but to discern
How best to solve the heavenly oracle.

Teiresias has time, during this short intervention from the chorus, to collect himself. He resumes speech to Œdipus, and enigmatically, with stern truth, threatens the impending doom:

Tei. Though thou art sovereign here, the right of speech
Is my prerogative no less. Not thee
I serve, but Phœbus. He protects my life.
Small need of Creon's arm to shelter me!
Now, then: my blindness is thy theme:—thou hast
Thine eyes, nor seest where thou art sunk in woe,
What halls thou dost inhabit, or with whom:
Knowest not from whence thou art—nay, to thy kin,
Buried in death and here above the ground,
Unwittingly art a most grievous foe.
And when thy father's and thy mother's curse
With fearful tread shall drive thee from the land,
On both sides lashing thee,—thine eye so clear
Seeing but darkness in that day,—O, then,
What region will not shudder at thy cry?
What echo of Cithæron will be mute,
When thou perceiv'st, what bride-song in thy hall
Wafted thy gallant bark with flattering gale

To anchor,—where? And other store of ill
Thou seest not, that shall show thee as thou art,
Merged with thy children in one horror of birth.
Then slander noble Creon, and revile
My sacred utterance! No life on earth
More wretchedly shall be crushed out, than thine.

TEIRESIAS DENOUNCING ŒDIPUS.

If our readers are a little perplexed with surprise that, after intimations, first so explicit, and then, though mys-

terious, so significant, from Teiresias, Œdipus should not recognize himself for the one pointed out as murderer of Laius, why, they will, in their minds, be criticising Sophocles exactly as he has often been criticised before. But remember, though Œdipus was indeed conscious with himself of having once killed a man, the circumstances of that killing were such as not at all to identify in his thought the victim with King Laius, or in truth with any king. The dark allusions of Teiresias to crime on Œdipus's part committed against father and mother, would naturally all be understood by the king to respect his Corinthian parents, whom he had forsaken for the very purpose of not committing against them the crimes foretold. Besides, Œdipus, being in a towering passion when Teiresias let slip the most explicit of his accusations, was then not mentally qualified to get the full force of the language that he heard.

At any rate, represented as still unaware of being himself the murderer sought, Œdipus burst out in a fierce Begone! to Teiresias. Teiresias, going, turns and aims this parting Parthian arrow at the king:

Tei. I go, but I will speak. Why should I fear
Thy frown? Thou ne'er canst ruin me. The word
Wherefore I came, is this. The man you seek
With threatening proclamation of the guilt
Of Laius's blood, that man is here to-day,
An alien sojourner supposed from far,
But by and by he shall be certified
A true-born Theban: nor will such event
Bring him great joy; for, blind from having sight
And beggared from high fortune, with a staff
In stranger lands he shall feel forth his way;
Shown living with the children of his loins,
Their brother and their sire, and to the womb
That bare him, husband-son, and, to his father,
Parricide and co-rival. Now go in,
Ponder my words; and if thou find them false,
Then say my power is naught in prophecy.

The chorus now comes in with one of those lyrics of sentiment and reflection which give voice to the supposed feelings of an ideal spectator present in the action itself to see what is done and to hear what is said. The occurrence of a lyric strain from the chorus seems after a sort to divide the tragedy into acts or scenes. We give this choric song. It will be observed that the chorus maintains here the conventional character of choruses in being as neutral as possible, and conservative:

CHORUS.

Whom hath the voice from Pytho's rocky throne
Loudly declared to have done
Horrors unnamable with blood-stained hand?
With speed of storm-swift car
'Tis time he fled afar
With mighty footsteps hurrying from the land.
For, armed with lightning brand,
The son of Zeus assails him with fierce bounds,
Hunting with Death's inevitable hounds.

Late from divine Parnassus' snow-tipped height
This utterance sprang to light,
To track by every path the man unknown.
Through woodland caverns deep
And o'er the rocky steep
Like vanquish'd bull he roams the wild alone,
With none to share his moan,
Shunning that prophet-voice's central* sound,
Which ever lives, and haunts him, hovering round.

The reverend Seer hath stirred me with strange awe,
Gainsay I cannot, nor yet think him true.
I know not how to speak. My fluttering heart
In wild expectancy sees nothing clear.
Things past and future with the present doubt
Are shrouded in one mist. What quarrel lay
'Twixt Cadmus' issue and Corinthus' heir
Was never shown me, from old times till now,
By one on whose sure word I might rely

* Proceeding from Delphi, the centre of the earth.

In running counter to the king's fair fame,
Wreaking for Laius his mysterious death.

Zeus and Apollo scan the ways of men
With perfect vision. But of mortals here
Why should the prophet have more gifts than I?
What certain proof is told? A man through wit
May pass another's wisdom in the race.
But never, till I see the word fulfilled,
Will I confirm their clamor against the king.
In open day the female monster came:
Then perfect witness made his wisdom clear.
Thebe has tried him and delights in him,
Wherefore my heart shall still believe him good.

Creon enters at this point to protest, publicly, against the criminations of himself indulged in by the king. The chorus, with solemn non-committal platitudes, avoids, and seeks to pacify, Creon's indignation. In reply to Creon's first protesting speech against Œdipus, the chorus volunteers a charitable suggestion on the king's behalf, which gives occasion to a highly characteristic exchange, between Creon and the chorus, of question on the one side, and evasive answer on the other:

Ch. Perchance 'twas but the sudden flash of wrath,
Not the deliberate judgment of the soul.
Cr. Whence came the fancy—that Teiresias spake
False prophecies, set on to this by me?
Ch. Such was the word; I know not how advised.
Cr. And were the eyes and spirit not distraught,
When the tongue uttered this to ruin me?
Ch. I cannot say. To what my betters do
I am blind. But see, the king comes forth again.

The stormy altercation that ensues when Œdipus re-enters, between him and his indignant brother-in-law Creon, with the sage interjection from the chorus of remarks designed as buffers to soften the shock between the angry brothers-in-law —all this we omit.

Jocasta, wife and queen, enters. She upbraids her husband and her brother with much impartiality. Both feel obliged each to vindicate himself. The chorus, divided up into five different groups, take part, with interruptions of the usual calm and commonplace choric wisdom. The purport of what all, Jocasta and the groups of chorus, propound is, that the two estranged kinsmen be reconciled. Œdipus urges that they are bent on dooming him to death or banishment, whereupon the fifth group of chorus breaks forth in this lyric protest and adjuration :

Ch. 5. No, by the Sun I swear,
Vaunt-courier of the host of heaven.
For may I die the last of deaths,
Unblest of God or friend,
If e'er such thought were mine.
But O! this pining land
Afflicts my hapless soul,
To think that to her past and present woe
She must add this, which springs from your debate.

The foregoing invocation, or conjuration, from the chorus, of Helios, would, it must be borne in mind by our readers, be far more impressive to spectators of the play who—as was the case at tragic exhibitions in ancient Athens—could follow the uplifted faces of the actors, while, with hands also pointing thither, they looked toward the open sky and beheld there the glorious sun himself, visible to all, shining down from his majestic station—far more impressive, we say, than can well be imagined by those who have only seen stage representations indoors by the garish artificial light of the modern theatre.

Creon, after a few more exchanges of altercation with Œdipus, withdraws, and the chorus, in groups again, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, intervene with sage counsel to the king and his queen, Jocasta. They beg Œdipus to explain to Jocasta the situation between himself and Creon, which he in

brief accordingly does. Jocasta thereupon seeks to re-assure the mind of Œdipus, disturbed by the sinister soothsaying of Teiresias—as follows:

> Hearken to me, and set your heart at rest
> On that you speak of, whilst I make you see
> No mortal thing is touched by prophecy.
> Of that I'll give thee proof concise and clear.
> Word came to Laius once, I will not say
> From Phœbus' self, but from his ministers,
> The king should be destroyed by his own son,
> If son were born to him from me. What followed?
> Laius was slain, by robbers from abroad,
> Saith Rumor, in a cross-way: but the child
> Grew not three days, ere by my husband's hand
> His feet were locked, and he was cast and left
> By messengers on the waste mountain wold.
> So Phœbus neither brought upon the boy
> His father's murder, nor on Laius
> The thing he greatly feared, death by his son.
> Such issue came of prophesying words,
> Therefore regard them not. God can himself
> With ease bring forth what for his ends he needs.

Jocasta's encouraging discourages. Quite unawares she wakes unwelcome memories in the breast of Œdipus. Conceive how an Athenian audience, sharing the dreadful secret of destiny still veiled to Œdipus, would hang, in a luxury of anticipative horror heightened and softened with sympathy, on the conversation that now follows between the king and the queen—a conversation prepared for with such skill by the poet. This conversation we give in full; for the whole scene, brought to its just completion by the solemn chant of the chorus at the end, is one of the finest dramatic passages in Sophocles. Œdipus, remember, has a dreadful misgiving, as he listens to the story told by Jocasta:

> *Œd.* What strange emotions overcloud my soul,
> Stirred to her depths on hearing this thy tale!

Jo. What sudden change is this? What is thy thought?
Œd. Did I not hear thee say, King Laius
Was at a cross-road overpowered and slain?
Jo. So ran the talk that yet is current here.
Œd. Where was the scene of this unhappy blow?
Jo. Phocis the land is named: the parted ways
Lead from one point to Daulia and to Delphi.
Œd. And since the event how much of time is passed?
Jo. 'Twas just ere you appeared with prospering speed
And took the kingdom, that the tidings came.
Œd. What are thy purposes against me, Zeus?
Jo. Why thus intent on such a thought, O king?
Œd. Nay, ask me not. But tell me first what height
Had Laius, and what share of manly bloom?
Jo. Tall, with dark locks just sprinkled o'er with gray:
In shape and bearing much resembling thee.
Œd. O heavy fate! How all unknowingly
I laid that dreadful curse on my own head!
Jo. How?
I tremble as I gaze on thee, O king!
Œd. The fear appalls me that the seer can see.
Tell one thing more, to make me doubly sure.
Jo. I am loth to speak, but, when you ask, I will.
Œd. Had he scant following, or, as princes use,
Full numbers of a well-appointed train?
Jo. There were but five in all: a herald one:
And Laius traveled in the only car.
Œd. Woe! woe! 'Tis clear as daylight. Who was he
That brought you this sad message, O my queen?
Jo. A home-slave, who alone returned alive.
Œd. And is he now at hand within the house?
Jo. No, truly. When he came from yonder scene,
And found thee reigning after Laius' death,
He touched my hand, and plied an urgent prayer
That I would send him to o'erlook the flocks
And rural pastures, so to live as far
As might be from the very thought of Thebes.
And he obtained from me his suit. No slave
Had richlier merited such boon than he.
Œd. Can he be brought again immediately?
Jo. Of course he can. But why desire it so?

Œd. Words have by me been spoken, O my queen,
Which furnish too much cause for that desire.
Jo. Then come he shall. But I may surely claim
To hear what in thy state goes heavily.
Œd. Thou shalt not lose thy rights in such an hour,
When I am harrowed thus with doubt and fear.
To whom more worthy should I tell my grief?
My father was Corinthian Polybus,
My mother Dorian Merope—I lived
A prince among that people, till a chance
Encountered me, worth wonder, but, though strange,
Not worth the anxious thoughts it waked in me.
For at a feasting once over the wine
One deep in liquor called to me aloud,
Hail, thou false foundling of a foster-sire!
That day with pain I held my passion down,
But straightway on the morrow I went near
And questioned both my parents, who were fierce
In wrath at him whose lips had let this fall.
For their part I was satisfied, but still
It galled me, for the rumor would not die.
Unknown to both my parents then I went
To Pytho, where, as touching my desire,
Phœbus denied me; but brake forth instead
With other oracles of misery
And horrible misfortune, how that I
Must know my mother's shame, and cause to appear
A birth intolerable to human view,
And do to death the author of my life.
I fled forth at the word, and, measuring now
Corinthia's region by the stars of heaven,
Went roaming, where I never might behold
Those shameful prophecies fulfilled on me.
So traveling on, I came even to the place
Where, as thou tell'st, the King of Thebe fell.
And, O my wife, I will hide naught from thee.
When I drew near the cross-road of your tale,
A herald, and a man upon a car,
Like your description, there encountered me.
And he who went before, and he himself
The gray-beard, sought to thrust me from the path.

Then in mine angry mood I sharply struck
The driver-man that turned me from the way;
Which when the elder saw, he watched for me
As I passed by, and from the chariot-seat
Smote full upon my head with the fork'd goad;
But paid no equal price, for, by a blow
From this right hand, smit with my staff, he fell
Instantly rolled out of the car supine.
I slew them every one. Now if that stranger
Had aught in common with King Laius,
What wretch on earth was e'er so lost as I?
Whom have the Heavens so followed with their hate?
No house of Theban or of foreigner
Must any more receive me, none henceforth
Must speak to me, but push me from the door!
I, I have laid this curse on mine own head?
Yea, and this arm that slew him now enfolds
His queen. O cruel stain! Am I not vile?
Polluted utterly! Yes, I must flee,
And, lost to Thebe, nevermore behold
My friends, nor tread my country, lest I meet
In marriage mine own mother, and bring low
His head that gave me life and reared my youth,
My father, Polybus. Ah! right were he
Who should declare some god of cruel mood
Had sent this trouble upon my soul! Ye powers,
Worshiped in holiness, ne'er may I see
That day, but perish from the sight of men,
Ere sins like these are branded on my name!

Ch. Thy fear is ours, O king: yet lose not hope,
Till thou hast heard him who beheld the deed.

Œd. Ay, that is all I still have left of hope,
To bide the coming of the shepherd man.

Jo. What eager thought attends his presence here?

Œd. I'll tell thee. Should his speech accord with thine
My life stands clear from this calamity.

Jo. What word of mine agreed not with the scene?

Œd. You said he spake of robbers in a band
As having slain him. Now if he shall still
Persist in the same number, I am free.
One man and many cannot be the same.

But should he tell of one lone traveler,
Then, unavoidably, this falls on me.

Jo. So 'twas given out by him, be sure of that.
He cannot take it back. Not I alone
But all the people heard him speak it so.
And should he swerve in aught from his first tale,
He ne'er will show the murder of the king
Rightly accordant with the oracle.
For Phœbus said expressly he should fall
Through him whom I brought forth. But that poor babe
Ne'er slew his sire, but perished long before.
Wherefore henceforth I will pursue my way
Regardless of all words of prophecy.

Œd. Wisely resolved. But still send one to bring
The laborer-swain, and be not slack in this.

Jo. I will, and promptly. Pass we now within!
My whole desire is but to work thy will.

CHORUS.

O may I live
Sinless and pure in every word and deed
Ordained by those firm laws, that hold their realm on high!
Begotten of Heaven, of brightest Ether born,
Created not of man's ephemeral mould,
They ne'er shall sink to slumber in oblivion.
A Power of God is there, untouched by Time.

Pride plants the root from whence the tyrant grows.
Insolent pride, if idly surfeited
With plenty inordinate, injurious wealth,
Mounts to his pinnacle, then leaps amain
Down a precipitous doom, where foothold finds he none.
Beneath the arm of God I would shelter me,
And pray him to maintain the people's cause,
Yea, all who strive for the universal good.

But if there be who walks disdainfully,
Reckless in act or word,
Fearless of Justice passing without awe
The abodes of Deity,—
Let evil Destiny take him for her own,
And quench his ill-starred wanton spirit, unless

He learn in time to traffic without wrong,
And hold his hands from sacrilegious gain;
Nor in mad folly grasp at things forbidden.
What man in such a course shall keep his soul
Unblasted by the artillery of Heaven?
Nay, were such lives continued in renown,
Most idle were our service.

Never again
Will I adore the holy central seat
Of Delphi, nor the famed Abæan shrine,
No, nor the Olympian home of the Most High,
Unless in clear fulfillment Phœbus' word
Be justified for every eye to see.
Zeus, if thy reign be not a fable of men,
If thou art Lord of all things, let thine eye
Behold, let thine eternal Power o'ertake!
They set at naught the fading oracle
Given long ago to Laius; the renown
Of great Apollo in every land grows dim;
Religion is no more.

There is, perhaps, hardly any chorus in ancient Greek tragedy more celebrated and more justly celebrated than the one immediately foregoing. Our readers will like to see the harmonious prose form into which our own contemporary lover and lauder of the Greek, Mr. Matthew Arnold, has thrown the beginning of this lofty choric strain of poetry and ethics. Perhaps we ought to let Mr. Arnold introduce here his translation with the preface of general appreciation with which he introduces it in his essay. The essay is that on "Pagan and Mediæval Religious Sentiment." He says:

"No other poets [than the Greek] so well show to the poetry of the present the way it must take; no other poets have lived so much by the imaginative reason; no other poets have made their work so well balanced; no other poets, who have so well satisfied the thinking-power, have so well satisfied the religious sense."

The "religious sense" of Christian readers will still, we imagine, crave something, in order to its full satisfaction, even after the following truly high and truly remarkable utterance of Sophocles:

"O that my lot may lead me in the path of holy innocence of word and deed, the path which august laws ordain, laws that in the highest empyrean had their birth, of which Heaven is the father alone, neither did the race of mortal men beget them, nor shall oblivion ever put them to sleep! The power of God is mighty in them, and groweth not old."

"Let Theocritus or St. Francis beat that," exclaims Mr. Arnold enthusiastically—and therewith closes his essay. It is a burst of emotion on his part that our readers will be better prepared to appreciate, when they come, later in this volume, to read the extract from Theocritus which Mr. Arnold adduced for comparison of pagan religious sentiment with mediæval Christian.

It will repay yet further to suspend the progress of our tragedy. We desire to set alongside of Mr. Campbell's metrical translation of the choric ode now under remark, a parallel translation in verse by a different hand. The following fine version we extract from Mr. Robert Whitelaw's volume of Sophocles translated. Mr. Whitelaw is a Rugby man, assistant-master of the school which Dr. Thomas Arnold made famous. He has produced a translation of Sophocles, which, both for scholar-like fidelity to the original, and for distinctively poetic flavor, we rank higher than the admirable work of Mr. Campbell. We were very evenly balanced in choosing, for present use, between these two English forms of Sophocles, both of them very recent and almost exactly contemporaneous with each other. We at length decided in favor of Mr. Campbell, only because we thought his more straightforward English constructions would make him a little more readily intelligible to English-reading students. It will interest some readers to know that in the

representation of this very tragedy, given with great success in the original language, about two years ago, at Harvard University, the translation supplied, for the convenience of spectators, in parallel pages with the Greek text, was Mr. Campbell's. Mr. Campbell's volume, however, since issued, exhibits many and important variations in renderings as compared with that publication. We may properly add that Messrs. J. R. Osgood & Co., of Boston, issue an elegant volume with admirable heliotype illustrations, giving a history of the spirited undertaking that, for the first time in America, afforded to the public an opportunity of seeing a Greek tragedy presented on the stage with approximately the same effect as attended an exhibition in the great Dionysiac theatre in ancient Athens. The illustrations are views, taken by electric light, of the stage, much as it actually appeared, occupied now by one set of figures and now by another, at different moments during the progress of the representation. Readers interested in the subject of the Œdipus Tyrannus would find this volume one exceedingly well worth examining. But here is Mr. Whitelaw's translation of the preceding chorus. It is versified without being rhymed:

O may my constant feet not fail, [*Strophe* 1.]
Walking in paths of righteousness
Sinless in word and deed—
True to those eternal laws
That scale forever the high steep
Of heaven's pure ether, whence they sprang:
For only in Olympus is their home,
Nor mortal wisdom gave them birth,
And, howsoe'er men may forget,
They will not sleep;
For the might of the god within them grows not old.
Rooted in pride the tyrant grows; [*Antistrophe* 1.]
But pride that with its own too-much
Is rashly surfeited,
Heeding not the prudent mean,
Down the inevitable gulf

From its high pinnacle is hurled,
Where use of feet or foothold there is none.
But, O kind gods, the noble strength,
That struggles for the state's behoof,
Unbend not yet:
In the gods have I put my trust—I will not fear.
But whoso walks disdainfully, [*Strophe* 2.]
In act or word,
And fears not justice, nor reveres
The thronéd gods,
Him let misfortune slay
For his ill-starred wantoning,
Should he heap unrighteous gains,
Nor from unhallowed paths withhold his feet,
Or reach rash hands to pluck forbidden fruit.
Who shall do this, and boast
That yet his soul is proof
Against the arrows of offended Heaven?
If honor crown such deeds as these,
Not song, but silence, then for me!
To earth's dread centre, unprofaned [*Antistrophe* 2.]
By mortal touch,
No more with awe will I repair,
Nor Abae's shrine,
Nor the Olympian plain,
If the truth stands not confessed,
Pointed at by all the world.
O Zeus supreme, if rightly thou art called—
Lord over all—let not these things escape
Thee and thy timeless sway!
For now men set at naught
Apollo's word, and cry, "Behold, it fails!"
His praise is darkened with a doubt;
And faith is sapped, and Heaven defied.

Jocasta, in her distress of mind, goes to worship at the nearest religious altar. But a messenger arrives from Corinth with news of the death of King Polybus, the reputed father of Œdipus. Jocasta is overjoyed. She hurries off an attendant to summon Œdipus. Œdipus, hearing the news, exclaims:

Ah! my Jocasta, who again will heed
The Pythian hearth oracular, and birds
Screaming in air, blind guides! that would have made
My father's death my deed; but he is gone,
Hidden underneath the ground, while I stand here
Harmless and weaponless:—unless, perchance,
My absence killed him,—so he may have died
Through me. But be that as it may, the grave
That covers Polybus from sight, hath closed
One voice of prophecy, worth nothing now.

We are to imagine the keenly anguished pleasure with which Greek spectators would receive this temporary relief to Œdipus—knowing as they do within themselves that it is a mere suspension of the inevitable catastrophe, an exquisitely tantalizing prolongation, provided for them by the poet, of the tense emotion proper to the tragic spectacle of a man vainly and unconsciously struggling, or anon ceasing to struggle, like a captured fly, in the cruel spider's web of fate. But Œdipus shudders with a chill of fear amid the very glow of his joy. His Corinthian mother, widow of King Polybus, survives, and he dreads the fulfillment of the oracle respecting his crime of incest with her. To remove this fear, the messenger from Corinth explains that Œdipus was not true son to Polybus and his Corinthian queen—that he was to them merely an adopted son. Whose true son, then, was he? But this the Corinthian messenger cannot reveal. Another man must be called, he namely, who placed Œdipus, a babe, in this informant's hands. But now let the dialogue from Sophocles proceed again:

Œd. Another gave me, then? You did not find me?
Mess. Another herdsman passed thee on to me.
Œd. Can you describe him? Tell us what you know.
Mess. He was called one of Laius' people, sure.
Œd. Of Laius once the sovereign of this land?
Mess. Yea, surely, he was shepherd of his flock.
Œd. And is he still alive for me to see?
Mess. You Thebans are most likely to know that.

Œd. Speak, any one of you in presence here,
Can you point out the swain he tells us of,
In town or country having known of him?
The time for this discovery is full come.
Ch. Methinks it is no other than the peasant
Whom thou didst seek before to see: but this
Could best be told by Queen Jocasta there.
Œd. We lately sought that one should come, my queen.
Know'st thou, is this of whom he speaks the same?
Jo. What matter who? Regard not, nor desire
Even vainly to remember aught he saith.
Œd. When I have found such tokens of my birth,
I must disclose it.
Jo. As you love your life,
By heaven I beg you, search no further here!
The sickness in my bosom is enough.
Œd. Nay, never fear. Were I proved thrice a slave
And waif of bondwomen, you still are noble.
Jo. Yet hearken, I implore you: do not so.
Œd. I cannot hear you. I must know this through.
Jo. With clear perception I advise the best.
Œd. This "best advice" is ever mine annoy.
Jo. Wretched one, never may you know your birth!
Œd. Will some one go and fetch the herdman hither?
Leave her to revel in her lordly line!
Jo. O horrible! O lost one! This alone
I speak to thee, and no word more forever. [*Exit.*]
Ch. Œdipus, wherefore is Jocasta gone,
Driven madly by wild grief? I needs must fear
Lest from this silence she make sorrow spring.
Œd. Leave her to raise what storm she will. But I
Will persevere to know mine origin,
Though from an humble seed. Her woman's pride
Is shamed, it may be, by my lowliness.
But I, whilst I account myself the son
Of prospering Fortune, ne'er will be disgraced.
For she is my true mother: and the months
Coheirs with me of the same father, Time,
Have marked my lowness and mine exaltation.
So born, so nurtured, I can fear no change,
That I need shrink to search this to the end.

[Œdipus remains, and gazes toward the country, while the chorus sing.]

This choric song we omit.

It is said that, at the Harvard representation of the play, the excitement of the spectators during the foregoing scene was intense. Jocasta—as long as she remained apart and silent on the stage—standing quite unnoticed by the king and the messenger, went through a vivid pantomime of posture and gesture expressive of the most passionate horror.

Enters the Theban shepherd expected by the king. The Corinthian messenger and the just-arrived shepherd are mutually confronted and asked to identify each other. The old Theban hesitates, but the Corinthian refreshes his memory. The messenger from Corinth, pointing to Œdipus, then says:

Mess. Friend, yonder is the infant whom we knew.
Theb. Sh. Confusion seize thee, and thy evil tongue!
Œd. Check not his speech, I pray thee, for thy words
Call more than his for chastisement, old sir.
Theb. Sh. O my dread lord, wherein do I offend?
Œd. Thou wilt not answer him about the child.
Theb. Sh. He knows not what he speaks. His end is vain.
Œd. So! Thou'lt not tell to please us, but the lash
Will make thee tell.
Theb. Sh. By all that's merciful
Scourge not this aged frame!
Œd. Pinion him straight!
Theb. Sh. Unhappy! wherefore? what is't you would know?
Œd. Gave you the child he asks of to this man?
Theb. Sh. I gave it him. Would I had died that hour!
Œd. Speak rightly, or your wish will soon come true.
Theb. Sh. My ruin comes the sooner, if I speak.
Œd. You mean to keep us in suspense, I see.
Theb. Sh. Not so. I said long since, "I gave the child."
Œd. Whence? Was't your own, or from another's hand?
Theb. Sh. 'Twas not mine own; another gave it me.
Œd. What Theban gave it, from what home in Thebes?
Theb. Sh. O, I implore thee, master, ask no more!
Œd. You perish, if I have to ask again.

Theb. Sh. The child was of the stock of Laius.
Œd. Slave-born, or rightly of the royal line?
Theb. Sh. Ah, me! Now comes the horror to my tongue!
Œd. And to mine ear. But thou shalt tell it me!
Theb. Sh. He was described as Laius' son: but she,
Thy queen, within the palace, best should know.
Œd. How? Did she give it thee?
Theb. Sh. My lord, she did.
Œd. With what commission?
Theb. Sh. I was to destroy him.
Œd. How could a mother's heart be steeled to this?
Theb. Sh. With fear of evil prophecies.
Œd. What were they?
Theb. Sh. 'Twas said the child should be his father's death.
Œd. What then possessed thee to give up the child
To this old man?
Theb. Sh. Pity, my sovereign lord!
Supposing he would take him far away
Unto the land whence he was come. But he
Preserved him to great sorrow. For if thou
Art he this man hath said, be well assured
Thou bear'st a heavy doom.
Œd. O horrible!
Horrible! All is known, as sunlight clear!
O may I nevermore behold the day,
Since proved accursèd in my parentage,
In those I live with, and in him I slew!

The solemn chorus of Theban elders take up now their music, and chant, in mournful recitative, the lesson of what they have seen, as follows:

CHORUS.

O tribes of living men,
How nothing-worth I count you while ye stand!
For who of all the train
Draws more of happiness into his hand
Than to seem bright, and, seeming, fade in gloom?
O, Œdipus, by thine all-hapless doom
Too clearly 'tis expressed
Naught in mortality is blest.

Thou that surpassing all in skill
With perfect aim didst kill
The crook-clawed minstrel, as a tower
Saving my land from death's dark power,
And winning for thyself the name
Of Thebe's king, and noblest fame,
Thou, thou, art fallen at last
To misery unsurpassed.
Who, in life's dark reverse,
Like thee hath felt the curse
Of destiny, the assault of boundless pain?
O Œdipus renowned,
Who in one haven found
Harbor for son and sire
When led with nuptial fire!
Ah! how could'st thou so long remain
The furrower of thy father's field,
Borne patiently and unrevealed?
Crimes from thyself concealed
All-searching time hath opened to the day,
And shown thee with clear ray,
Long while, in hideous bond, spouse, father, child.
O Laius' fatal son,
Would I had ne'er thee known!
My heart cries loud for thee
In tones of agony,
And frenzied exclamation wild.
For, to speak sooth, thou didst restore my life,
And gav'st my soul sweet respite after strife.

Something meantime—that is, during the choric chant—has been passing behind the scenes. A second messenger comes forward to announce the suicide of the queen. Œdipus himself, raging through the palace, found her hanging by the neck apparently already dead. He undid the noose, but from this point let Sophocles, through the messenger, tell the tale:

'Twas terrible
To see what followed—for he tore away
The brooch-pins that had fastened her attire,
And, lifting, smote his eyeballs to the root,

Saying, Henceforth they should not see the evil
Suffered or done by him in the past time,
But evermore in darkness now should scan
The features he ought never to have seen,
And not discern the souls he longed to know.
Thus crying aloud, not once but oftentimes
He dashed the points into his eyes ; and soon
The bleeding pupils moistened all his beard,
Nor stinted the dark flood, but all at once
The ruddy hail poured down in plenteous shower.
Thus from two springs, from man and wife together,
Burst the joint evil that is now o'erflowing.
And the old happiness in that past day
Was truly happy, but the present hour
Hath groaning, death, disaster, shame, all ill
Without exemption, that hath e'er been named.

"A hateful sight, yet one thou needs must pity," is the form of announcement with which the second messenger, having closed his story, ushers now the blinded Œdipus upon the stage. The chorus exclaim at sight of him, with mingled pity and horror. Œdipus himself bursts out: [we use for this next extract the extraordinarily fine rendering of Mr. Whitelaw:]

O thou thick cloud of darkness,
That on my life hast settled,
Abominable, unutterable,
Indomitable,
By pitiless winds swept hitherward on me ;
Alas !
And yet again, alas, and woe is me !
Such maddening pain
Of those sharp daggers at my eyes,
Blent with remembrance of my misery,
Pierces my inmost soul.

The chorus reply with non-committal sympathy: [Mr. Whitelaw for translator this once again:]

No marvel if, in such extremity,
Thy grief is twofold, as thy suffering is.

Œdipus, nevertheless, is touched with even such a token of kindness, and answers gratefully. To the inquiry what power impelled him to put out his own eyes, "Apollo, O my friends, Apollo," is his answer. It is but lukewarm friendliness that the chorus show the king, in the dialogue which follows. Poor Œdipus, however, in his low estate is fain to be thankful for scant measure of human sympathy now.

The crisis of the tragic interest past, it is, henceforward to the close of the poem, the poet's problem to let down the high-wrought emotions of the spectators, by smooth and easy cadence, to a calm mood of suitable ethic or religious awe. With what skill the tension is gradually relaxed! It would have been bad art in Sophocles, either to close at the climax, or to permit a sudden violent descent.

The just limits of our space forbid us to display all this at full. We plunge into the prolonged lamentations of Œdipus, at the point where he refers to his children:

Thou, Creon, shalt provide. As for my sons,
I pray thee burden not thyself with them.
They ne'er will lack subsistence—they are men.
But my poor maidens, hapless and forlorn,
Who never had a meal apart from mine,
But ever shared my table, yea, for them
Take heedful care; and grant me, though but once,
Yea, I beseech thee, with these hands to feel,
Thou noble heart! the forms I love so well,
And weep with them our common misery.
O, if my arms were round them, I might seem
To have them as of old when I could see.—
What? Am I fooled once more, or do I hear
My dear ones weeping? And hath Creon sent,
Pitying my sorrows, mine own children to me
Whom most I love? Can this be truth I utter?

Creon. Yea, I have done it. For I knew the joy
Thou ever hadst in this, thy comfort now.

Œd. Fair be thy fortune, and, for this last deed,
May Heaven protect thee better far than me!

Where are ye, O my children? Come, draw near
To these my hands of brother blood with you,
Hands that have made so piteous to your sight
The spectacle of his once brilliant eyes,
Who all in blindness, with no thought of ill,
Became your father at that fount of life,
Where he himself had being! O! for you
I weep, not seeing you, when I take thought
Of all the bitter passages of fate
That must attend you among men. For where
Can ye find fellowship, what civic throng
Shall ye resort unto, what festival,
From whence, instead of sights or sounds enjoyed,
Ye will not come in tears unto your home?
And when ye reach the marriageable bloom,
My daughters, who will be the man to cast
His lot with the unfortunate, and take
All those reproaches on his name, which press
So sorely on my parents and on you?
. . . . . .
And who will marry you? No man, my daughters;
But ye must wither, childless and unwed.
. . . . . .
But look with pity upon their youth, thus left
Forlorn of all protection save from thee.
Noble one, seal this promise with thy hand!
For you, my children, were ye of an age
To ponder speech, I would have counseled you
Full carefully. Now I would have you pray
To dwell where 'tis convenient, that your life
May find more blessing than your father knew.

Cr. Thou hast had enough of weeping. Close thee in thy chamber walls.

Œd. I must yield, though sore against me,

Cr. Yea, for strong occasion calls.

Œd. Know'st thou on what terms I yield it?

Cr. Tell me, let us hear and know.

Œd. That ye send me from the country.

Cr. God alone can let thee go.

Œd. But the gods long since abhor me.

Cr. Thou wilt sooner gain that boon.

Œd. Then consent.

Cr. Tis not my wont to venture promises too soon.
Œd. Lead me now within the palace.
Cr. Come, but leave thy children.
Œd. Nay!
Tear not these from my embraces!
Cr. Think not all things to command.
Of the good thou hadst beforetime much hath fleeted from thy hand.

CHORUS.

Dwellers in our native Thebe, fix on Œdipus your eyes,
Who resolved the dark enigma, noblest champion and most wise.
Glorious, like a sun he mounted, envied of the popular throng;
Now he sinks in seas of anguish, plunged the lashing waves among.
Therefore, with the old-world sages, waiting for the final day,
I will call no mortal happy, while he holds his house of clay,
Till without one pang of sorrow, all his hours have passed away.

Our readers will recognize in this "conclusion of the whole matter," delivered by the chorus, the sentiment and wisdom of Solon to Crœsus. Compare and contrast the last chorus of Milton's Samson Agonistes: (here given in part:)

"All is best, though we oft doubt
What the unsearchable dispose
Of Highest Wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
. . . . .
His servants he, with new acquist
Of true experience, from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,
And calm of mind, all passion spent."

The closing lines may be regarded as a kind of interpretation and application from Milton of Aristotle's definition of tragedy quoted in a foregoing page. (We would strongly recommend to readers that can command the leisure for it, to give the specimens here presented of Greek tragedy as many as three separate perusals. The third perusal will be found the most enjoyable and the most profitable of all.)

We reluctantly now let go the fairest, most fortunate, most

ideal figure of poet that Greek literary history has to show. But he shall sing us a nightingale song of nightingales as he goes. The following lovely choric ode, given only in part, we take from the Œdipus at Colonus, a tragedy of Sophocles written in sequel and supplement to the great play just presented. Let readers remember that Colonus was the birthplace of Sophocles. We use here once more, in a very fine specimen of its rare workmanship and its congenial sympathy with poetry, the translation of Mr. Whitelaw:

To the land of the steed, O stranger,
To the goodliest homes upon earth thou comest—
White-cliffed Colonus, this,
Loud with the melody piercing sweet
Of nightingales that most delight
Its deep green glades to haunt—
Lovers of the ivy sheen
And the myriad-berried thick-leaved bower
Of the grove of the god, no foot profanes,
Sunproof, nor vexed by wind,
Whatever storms may blow;
Where Dionysus, wandering still, enrapt,
Waits on the heavenly maids, his nurses once,
And the clustering fair narcissus
Eve by eve out of heaven the fresh dew drinketh—
Meet for the mighty brows,
Erst at Eleusis its florets graced—
And bright the crocus springs like gold:
Nor fail the sleepless founts,
Whence, Cephisus, thy streams are fed;
But they flow, and the quick-conceiving plains
Of the bountiful-bosomed earth are glad,
Undwindling, day by day,
Of thine untainted shower:
Nor hath such haunt displeased the Muses' choir
Nor Aphrodite of the golden rein.

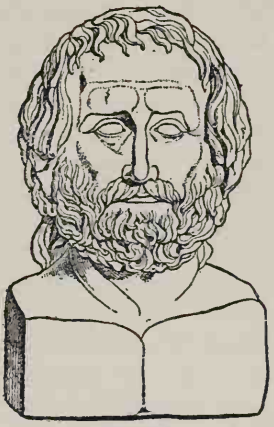
No appreciative reader will feel it to be surprising that dotage should have been effectually refuted for Sophocles, by his opportune recitation of this ode in praise of Colonus.

the flowering—if but the critics will let us credit the story—of an old age in the writer, that kept all the freshness, having parted with all the crudeness, of youth. Farewell to thee, poet, thus unalterably young at ninety! Whatever lay in the power of happy condition to do for mortal—that mortal yet remaining contentedly pagan—all this assuredly happy condition did, and abundantly did, for Sophocles.

VII.

EURIPIDES.

The third member of the great tragical triumvirate of Greece was Euripides. The great tragical triumvirate, we say—but it ought not to be forgotten that, besides Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, who alone survive to us in their productions, there flourished in Athens, at the same time with these, other tragedians scarcely inferior to them in contemporary fame. Agathon, of whom readers of this volume will remember seeing mention made in the course of our presentation of Plato, is an example of those illustrious tragic poets of Greece whose works have utterly perished.



EURIPIDES.

Euripides was born, an Athenian, (480 B. C.,) in the year, perhaps on the day, of the battle of Salamis. He had a long career; but, though born some years after, he died a few months before, his generous, more prosperous, but not more popular, rival—Sophocles. It was one of those graceful acts

which so well became the genius and the character of the latter, that he signalized his sorrow over the death of his peer, by causing the actors in his own next play to appear in mourning for the loss of Euripides. Aristophanes, on the contrary, persecuted Euripides even in his grave. The closing days of this third great tragedian of Greece were spent at the court of the king of Macedonia.

Euripides seems not as yet to have attracted any translators capable of giving him entirely satisfactory form in English verse. A reasonably good metrical translation has, however, been executed by Mr. R. Potter. There is, besides, a strictly literal, not very living, version in prose from the hand of Mr. T. A. Buckley, an Oxford scholar. Mr. Plumptre, who has admirably versified Æschylus and Sophocles, has not, up to the present time, extended his labors to Euripides. Of one play however of Euripides, we are fortunate in possessing a version from no less a master than Mr. Robert Browning. It happily chances, too, that this play is precisely the one which, of all the extant works of Euripides, we should in any case have selected for presentation to our readers. It is the Alcestis. (The Raging Hercules may also be read in a version by Mr. Browning. This is given in a poem of his entitled "Aristophanes' Apology.")

Mr. Browning's Alcestis must be looked for under the title of "Balaustion's Adventure." Balaustion (wild pomegranate flower) is the pet name, invented by Mr. Browning, of a Greek girl, also invented by Mr. Browning, who, at the time of the Sicilian Expedition, escaped from the island of Rhodes (on the point then of revolting from Athens to Sparta) and fled in a small vessel—she and with her a number of like-minded companions bent on making their way to the Peiræus. They were pursued by pirates, and, mistaking Sicily for Crete, rowed hard to land near Syracuse, where, detected as Athenian in sympathy by a song with which they had cheered themselves in rowing, they were met with a repulse,

which, however, changed to a welcome when it was found out that Balaustion could recite a play of Euripides. The Alcestis was the play. Such is the plot of Mr. Browning's poem. The plot has a foundation in fact, or, at least, in tradition. It is said that Athenian captives in Syracuse that knew snatches of Euripides could earn for themselves substantial advantages by reciting these for the gratification of their kindred Greek-speaking masters.

The story of the Alcestis of Euripides is very simple. Alcestis was wife and queen to Admetus, king of Pheræ, in Thessaly. Admetus was, by grace from Apollo, granted the privilege of not dying, on condition of his being able to find some one who would agree to die in his stead when his turn should come. Alcestis became the required substitute and died, but was brought back to life by Heracles, and restored to her husband.

The play opens with a prologue from Apollo, who, after explaining the situation for the enlightenment of spectators, (compare the prologue to Milton's Mask of Comus,) has a fruitless colloquy with Death, come now for his prey, Alcestis having reached the day of her doom. With this colloquy we begin our citations from the play. A curious passage it is. Some critics pronounce it very fine, and some critics pronounce it very foolish. Our readers shall form their own judgment without bias communicated from the present author.

Jealous Death suspects Apollo of intention to interfere a second time with his rights. Apollo says he has no idea of using with Death any plea but justice. Whereupon Death significantly slanting at Apollo's customary weapon:

Death. What need of bow, were justice arms enough?
Apollo. Ever it is my wont to bear the bow.
De. Ay, and with bow, not justice, help this house.
Ap. I help it, since a friend's woe weighs me, too.
De. And now wilt force from me this second corpse?

Ap. By force I took no corpse at first from thee.
De. How, then, is he above ground—not beneath?
Ap. He gave his wife, instead of him, thy prey.
De. And prey, this time at least, I bear below!
Ap. Go, take her! for I doubt persuading thee—
De. To kill the doomed one? What my function else?
Ap. No! Rather to despatch the true mature.
De. Truly I take thy meaning—see thy drift!
Ap. Is there a way, then, she may reach old age?
De. No way! I glad me in my honors, too!
Ap. But, young or old, thou tak'st one life—no more!
De. Younger they die, greater my praise redounds!
Ap. If she die old—the sumptuous funeral!
De. Thou layest down a law the rich would like!
Ap. How so? Did wit lurk there and 'scape thy sense?
De. Who could buy substitutes would die old men.
Ap. It seems thou wilt not grant me, then, this grace?
De. This grace I will not grant; thou know'st my ways!
Ap. Ways harsh to men, hateful to gods, at least!
De. All things thou canst not have: my rights for me!

. . . . . .

Apollo retorts with a vague prophecy that Heracles will soon be at hand to rob Death after all of his prey. Death rejoins once again with a savage show of his grinning teeth, as Apollo withdraws. Apollo gone, a chorus of sympathizers assemble at the palace door, to learn about the progress of events within. Knowing what impends, they inquire, draw inferences, and bewail, by turns. Is Alcestis dead? But there is no sound of lamenting to be heard. Can the corpse have been already carried forth? No signs appear that this has happened.

Presently the full chorus join in symphony accentuated, we are to suppose, with rhythmic movement in dance. We omit this passage. A palace-maid comes out, who describes to the chorus the beautiful behavior of Alcestis about to die, as follows:

Hear what she did indoors, and wonder then!
For, when she felt the crowning day was come,

She washed with river waters her white skin,
And, taking from the cedar closets forth
Vesture and ornament, bedecked herself
Nobly, and stood before the hearth, and prayed:
"Mistress, because I now depart the world,
Falling before thee the last time, I ask—
Be mother to my orphans! wed the one
To a kind wife, and make the other's mate
Some princely person: nor, as I who bore
My children perish, suffer that they, too,
Die all untimely, but live, happy pair,
Their full glad life out in the fatherland?"
And every altar through Admetos' house
She visited and crowned and prayed before,
Stripping the myrtle-foliage from the boughs
Without a tear, without a groan—no change
At all to that skin's nature, fair to see,
Caused by the imminent evil. But this done,
Reaching her chamber, falling on her bed,
There, truly, burst she into tears, and spoke:
. . . . . .
But, when of many tears she had her fill,
She flings from off the couch, goes headlong forth,
Yet—forth the chamber—still keeps turning back,
And casts her on the couch again once more.
Her children, clinging to their mother's robe,
Wept meanwhile: but she took them in her arms,
And, as a dying woman might, embraced
Now one and now the other: 'neath the roof,
All of the household servants wept as well,
Moved to compassion for their mistress; she
Extended her right hand to all and each,
And there was no one of such low degree
She spoke not to nor had an answer from.
Such are the evils in Admetos' house.
Dying—why, he had died; but, living, gains
Such grief as this he never will forget!

There is more description from the palace attendant of what was passing within, accompanied or interchanged with more choral lamentation. Mr. Browning, while a sad pro-

cession issues from the palace, avails himself of the occasion to introduce a considerable passage of interpretation and interpolation highly characteristic of his very peculiar genius. This we omit of course—not because it is devoid of interest, but for the twofold reason that it would be somewhat obscure to those not already versed in Browning, and that it does not belong to Euripides. Now appears dying Alcestis with her husband, her son, and the chorus. Poor Alcestis, with that Greek love of light, will see the sun once more. The dialogue that ensues, if dialogue it should be called, say, rather, the monologue-apostrophe of Alcestis interrupted by exclamations from Admetus that she, in her rapt state, at first does not heed—this passage, whatever it is to be styled, deserves to be given. Mr. Browning at this point breaks in so much with matter not of Euripides that we forsake him for the moment to take up here the version of Mr. Potter:

Alcestis. Thou sun, and thou fair light of day! ye clouds
That in quick eddies whirl along the sky!
Admetus. Sees thee and me most wretched, yet in naught
Offending 'gainst the gods that thou shouldst die.
Alc. O earth, ye tower'd roofs, thou bridal bed,
Raised in Iolcos, my paternal seat!
Adm. O thou poor sufferer, raise thee, leave me not;
Intreat the powerful gods to pity thee.
Alc. I see the two-oar'd boat, the Stygian barge;
And he that wafts the dead grasps in his hand
His pole, and calls me: "Why dost thou delay?
Haste thee; thou lingerest; all is ready here!"
Charon, impatient, speeds me to be gone.
Adm. A melancholy voyage this to me.
O thou unhappy, what a fate is ours!
Alc. He drags me, some one drags me to the gates
That close upon the dead; dost thou not see
How stern he frowns beneath his gloomy brows,
The impetuous Pluto? What wouldst thou with me?
Off, let me go. Ah, what a dreary path,
Wretched, most wretched, must I downward tread!

Adm. To thy friends mournful, most to me, and these
Thy children, who with me this sorrow share.
Alc. No longer hold me up, hold me no longer;
Here lay me down: I have not strength to stand;
Death is hard by: dark night creeps o'er my eyes.
My children, O, my children, now no more,
Your mother is no more: farewell; may you,
More happy, see the golden light of heaven!
Adm. Ah, what a mournful word is this! to me
Than any death more painful: by the gods
Forsake me not; shouldst thou be taken from me,
I were no more; in thee I live; thy love,
Thy sweet society, my soul reveres.

We may now return to Mr. Browning for the speech in which Alcestis, becoming conscious once more of Admetus, adjures him to be true to her own memory, and, for their joint sake, to their children:

Alkestis. Admetos, how things go with me thou seest,
I wish to tell thee, ere I die, what things
I will should follow. I—to honor thee,
Secure for thee, by my own soul's exchange,
Continued looking on the daylight here—
Die for thee—yet, if so I pleased, might live.
. . . . .
Do me in turn a favor—favor, since
Certainly I shall never claim my due,
For nothing is more precious than a life:
But a fit favor, as thyself wilt say,
Loving our children here no less than I,
If head and heart be sound in thee at least.
Uphold them, make them masters of my house,
Nor wed and give a step-dame to the pair,
Who, being a worse wife than I, through spite
Will raise her hand against both thine and mine;
Never do this at least, I pray to thee!
. . . . . .
Farewell, be happy! And to thee, indeed,
Husband, the boast remains permissible,
Thou hadst a wife was worthy! and to you
Children, as good a mother gave you birth.

The chorus cheerfully undertake for Admetus that he will perform his wife's wishes. Admetus also answers up for himself. He mixes, it will be seen, a bitter dash of the unfilial with the overflowing sweet of his conjugal:

Admetos. Fear not, and, since I had thee living, dead
Alone wilt thou be called my wife: no fear
That some Thessalian ever styles herself
Bride, hails this man for husband in thy place!
. . . . .
And I shall bear for thee no year-long grief,
But grief that lasts while my own days last, love—
Love, for my hate is she who bore me, now,
And him I hate, my father: loving ones,
Truly, in word, not deed! But thou didst pay
All dearest to thee down, and buy my life,
Saving me so! Is there not cause enough
That I, who part with such companionship
In thee, should make my moan?
. . . . . .
But were the tongue and tune of Orpheus mine,
So that to Koré crying, or her lord,
In hymns, from Hades I might rescue thee,
Down would I go, and neither Plouton's dog
Nor Charon, he whose oar sends souls across,
Should stay me till again I made thee stand
Living, within the light! But, failing this,
There, where thou art, await me when I die,
Make ready our abode, my house-mate still!
For in the self-same cedar, me with thee,
Will I provide that these our friends shall place,
My side lay close by thy side! Never, corpse
Although I be, would I division bear
From thee, my faithful one of all the world!

Mr. Browning makes Balaustion, at the conclusion of this effusive speech from Admetus, interrupt the progress of the play with reflections of her own. These are so good and so pertinent that we transfer them—within quotation-marks to distinguish them from the text of the original—to our pages. They seem a necessary expression of thought forced upon

the modern mind by the part which Euripides makes Admetus play in this singular tragedy—tragedy so singular that the author might almost have done well to imitate (by anticipation) the modesty of Tennyson in naming his "Princess," and style his play "Medley" instead of "Tragedy." Mr. Browning's Balaustion says (Moirai is the Greek form for Fates—Mr. Browning scrupulously spells Greek fashion everywhere):

> "So he stood sobbing: nowise insincere,
> But somehow child-like, like his children,
> Like childishness the world over. What was new
> In this announcement that his wife must die?
> What particle of pain beyond the pact
> He made, with eyes wide open, long ago—
> Made, and was, if not glad, content to make?
> Now that the sorrow he had called for came,
> He sorrowed to the height: none heard him say,
> However, what would seem so pertinent,
> 'To keep this pact, I find surpass my power:
> Rescind it, Moirai! Give me back her life,
> And take the life I kept by base exchange!
> Or, failing that, here stands your laughing-stock
> Fooled by you, worthy just the fate o' the fool
> Who makes a pother to escape the best
> And gain the worst you wiser powers allot!'
> No, not one word of this: nor did his wife,
> Despite the sobbing, and the silence soon
> To follow, judge so much was in his thought—
> Fancy that, should Moirai acquiesce,
> He would relinquish life, nor let her die.
> The man was like some merchant who, in storm,
> Throws the freight over to redeem the ship:
> No question, saving both were better still.
> As it was—why, he sorrowed, which sufficed.
> So, all she seemed to notice in his speech
> Was what concerned her children.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> So, bending to her children all her love,
> She fastened on their father's only word
> To purpose now, and followed it with this:

[We return to Euripides for the exchange of parting words that ensues :]

Alkestis. O, children ! now yourselves have heard these things—
Your father saying he will never wed
Another woman to be over you,
Nor yet dishonor me !
Admetos. And now at least
I say it, and I will accomplish too !
Alk. Then, for such promise of accomplishment,
Take from my hand these children !
Adm. Thus I take—
Dear gift from the dear hand !
Alk. Do thou become
Mother, now, to these children in my place !
Adm. Great the necessity I should be so,
At least to these bereaved of thee !
Alk. Child—child !
Just when I needed most to live, below
Am I departing from you both !
Adm. Ah me !
And what shall I do then left lonely thus ?
Alk. Time will appease thee : who is dead is naught.
Adm. Take me with thee : take, by the gods below !
Alk. We are sufficient, we who die for thee.
Adm. O, Powers ! ye widow me of what a wife !
Alk. And truly the dimmed eye draws earthward now !
Adm. Wife, if thou leav'st me, I am lost indeed !
Alk. She once was—now is nothing, thou may'st say.
Adm. Raise thy face, nor forsake thy children thus !
Alk. Ah, willingly indeed I leave them not !
But—fare ye well, my children !
Adm. Look on them—
Look !
Alk. I am nothingness.
Adm. What dost thou ! Leav'st—
Alk. Farewell !

The most pathetic of the tragedians, Aristotle considers Euripides to be. Here, exercising good art, he prolongs the pathos of the scene of death with additional exclamations

from Admetus, from the children, and from the chorus of bystanders. Admetus bids his Thessalian subjects share his grief with him. They must clip their own locks, and shear their horses' manes. Twelve months they must refrain from cheerful music.

The chorus hereupon chant, moving in mystic dance the while, as follows: (for this lyric strain we use Mr. Potter's rhymed version):

STROPHE I.

Immortal bliss be thine,
Daughter of Pelias, in the realms below;
Immortal pleasures round thee flow,
Though never there the sun's bright beams shall shine.
Be the black-brow'd Pluto told,
And the Stygian boatman old,
Whose rude hands grasp the oar, the rudder guide,
The dead conveying o'er the tide,
Let him be told, so rich a freight before
His light skiff never bore:
Tell him, that o'er the joyless lakes
The noblest of her sex her dreary passage takes.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Thy praise the bards shall tell,
When to their hymning voice the echo rings;
Or when they sweep the solemn strings,
And wake to rapture the seven-chorded shell;
Or in Sparta's jocund bowers,
Circling when the vernal hours
Bring the Carnean feast; while through the night
Full-orb'd the high moon rolls her light;
Or where rich Athens, proudly elevate,
Shows her magnific state;
Their voice thy glorious death shall raise,
And swell the enraptured strain to celebrate thy praise.

STROPHE II.

O, that I had the power,
Could I but bring thee from the shades of night
Again to view this golden light,
To leave that boat, to leave that dreary shore,

Where Cocytus, deep and wide,
Rolls along his sullen tide!
For thou, O best of women, thou alone
For thy lord's life daredst give thy own.
Light lie the earth upon that gentle breast,
And be thou ever bless'd!
But should he choose to wed again,
Mine and thy children's hearts would hold him in disdain.

ANTISTROPHE II.

When, to avert his doom,
His mother in the earth refused to lie;
Nor would his ancient father die
To save his son from an untimely tomb;
Though the hand of time had spread
Hoar hairs o'er each aged head;
In youth's fresh bloom, in beauty's radiant glow,
The darksome way thou daredst to go,
And for thy youthful lord's to give thy life.
Be mine so true a wife,
Though rare the lot: then should I prove
The indissoluble bond of faithfulness and love.

In the foregoing version of this Euripidean chorus, our readers have the opportunity of studying the symmetry, or correspondence in measure, between line and line, in strophe and antistrophe of the elaborate Greek choral ode.

The sorrowful monotony of the play now suffers a sudden, almost staggering, interruption. Heracles (Hercules) bursts in with a gruff and bluff heartiness of unconscious discord, which Mr. Browning well reproduces. In truth, Mr. Browning's admiring idealization of Heracles is the finest thing in his whole poem of "Balaustion's Adventure." We give Balaustion's account of the entrance of Heracles. It will be observed that this demigod is represented by Mr. Browning as a great, wholesome-hearted, generous champion of mankind, feeding enormously, but not gluttonously, simply to repair the waste of his prodigious exertions on behalf of the suffering. Now Mr. Browning's Balaustion, with her narrative of

the representation she saw of Alcestis (we use double quotation-marks again to distingush this as Browning, not Euripides; only the few words in the course of the present extract that appear single-quoted being translation from the Greek):

"A great voice—
'My hosts here!'
O, the thrill that ran through us!
Never was aught so good and opportune
As that great interrupting voice! For see!
Here maundered this dispirited old age
Before the palace; whence a something crept
Which told us well enough without a word
What was a-doing inside—every touch
O' the garland on those temples, tenderest
Disposure of each arm along its side,
Came putting out what warmth i' the world was left.
Then, as it happens at a sacrifice
When, drop by drop, some lustral bath is brimmed:
Into the thin and clear and cold, at once
They slaughter a whole wine-skin; Bacchos' blood
Sets the white water all a-flame: even so,
Sudden into the midst of sorrow, leapt
Along with the gay cheer of that great voice,
Hope, joy, salvation: Herakles was here!
Himself o' the threshold, sent his voice on first
To herald all that human and divine
I' the weary happy face of him—half god,
Half man, which made the god-part god the more.

'Hosts mine,' he broke upon the sorrow with,
'Inhabitants of this Pheraian soil,
Chance I upon Admetos inside here?'

The irresistible sound wholesome heart
O' the hero—more than all the mightiness
At labor in the limbs that, for man's sake,
Labored and meant to labor their life long—
This drove back, dried up sorrow at its source.
How could it brave the happy weary laugh?
. . . . . .
'He is i' the house,' they answer."

We must shorten the story of how Admetus concealed from Heracles the true situation of affairs and got him to stay as guest, under the impression that only a stranger woman of the house had died. Admetus did not quite lie outright to his guest-friend. Who is the man that has died? inquires Heracles. Not a man—a woman, evades Admetus. Alien, then, or born kin of thine? pursues Heracles. Alien, parries Admetus, though still related to my house. Bystanders and domestics are surprised to see Admetus insist at such cost on being hospitable to the stranger. However, the complaisant chorus laud the hospitality of the house in a strain which, fortunately, we are able to show our readers under a noble form given to it by one who signs only the initials "T. E. W.," to this choice fragment of translation, published first as a contribution to the "College Magazine," Dublin, October, 1857:

Hail, house of the open door,
To the guest and the wanderer free!
The lord of the lyre himself of yore
Deigned to inhabit thee.
In thy halls disguised in his shepherd's weeds
He endured for a while to stay,
Through the upland rocks
To the feeding flocks
Piping his pastoral lay.
And the spotted lynx was tame
With the joy of the mighty spell;
And a tawny troop, the lions came
From the leafy Othrys' dell;
And where the tall pines waved their locks,
Still as thy lute would play,
Light tripped the fawn
O'er the level lawn
Entranced by the genial lay.
The house where the lord Admetus bides
Is blest for the Pythian's sake—
Fast by the shores that skirt the tides
Of the pleasant Bœbian lake;

His fallows and fields the Molossians bound
Toward the stalls of the Steeds of Day,
And to airy sweep
Of Ægean steep
All Pelion owns his sway.
He will welcome his guest with a moisten'd lid,
Though the halls be opened wide;
And affection's tear will start unbid
For her that hath lately died.
For the noble heart to its sorrows yields;
But wise is the good man's breast,
And my faith I plight
He will act aright
By the dead and the stranger guest.

Admetus invites the sympathizing chorus to salute his dead wife as she is borne to the tomb. But Euripides provides for us a fresh surprise. It is a scene between Admetus and his father Pheres. This scene is so scandalizing to our sense of what is decent and what is probable, that one can hardly read it without feeling in it an effect of the farcical. The mixed character of the play is forced by it still more strongly on our notice. A most unseemly altercation takes place between father and son over the very bier of the dead. Mere selfishness has seldom appeared more unrelievedly repulsive than in this scene it appears as exemplified in Admetus. The whole representation seems to us to waver on a razor-edge between the serious and the comic. The weight of a feather would incline it irrecoverably toward the ridiculous. Can we suspect Euripides of laughing in his sleeve while he makes tragedy for others of what is pure burlesque for himself? But our readers must see a sample of what it is that we are talking about. Mr. Browning seems himself to have felt the difficulty for which we have just been attempting to find expression. He has accordingly, with much fine ingenuity, devised a vindicatory interpretation of Euripides at this point, which our readers will enjoy studying in the full text of "Balaustion's Adventure." We

omit here every thing but the translated text itself of the original, and that we condense to a mere fraction of its full volume. Pheres enters with a train of servants bringing funeral gifts for the deceased Alcestis. He speaks:

Pheres. Take this tribute of adornment, deep
In the earth let it descend along with her!
Behooves we treat the body with respect
Of one who died, at least, to save thy life,
Kept me from being childless, nor allowed
That I, bereft of thee, should peak and pine
In melancholy age.

. . . . . .

I maintain, if mortals must
Marry, this sort of marriage is the sole
Permitted those among them who are wise!

Admetos. Neither to this interment called by me
Comest thou, nor thy presence I account
Among the covetable proofs of love.
As for thy tribute of adornment,—no!
Ne'er shall she don it, ne'er in debt to thee
Be buried! What is thine, that keep thou still!
Then it behooved thee to commiserate
When I was perishing: but thou, who stood'st
Foot-free o' the snare, wast acquiescent then
That I, the young, should die, not thou, the old,—
Wilt thou lament this corpse thyself hast slain?
Thou wast not, then, true father to this flesh,
Nor she, who makes profession of my birth,
And styles herself my mother.

. . . . . .

And yet a fair strife had been thine to strive,
Dying for thine own child; and brief for thee
In any case, the rest of time to live;
While I had lived, and she, our rest of time,
Nor I been left to groan in solitude.

. . . . . .

How vainly do these aged pray for death,
Abuse the slow drag of senility!
But should death step up, nobody inclines
To die, nor age is now the weight it was!

Chorus. Pause !
Enough the present sorrow ! Nor, O son,
Whet thus against thyself thy father's soul !
. . . . . .
Pheres. Never did I receive it as a law
Hereditary, no, nor Greek at all,
That sires in place of sons were bound to die.
. . . . . .
Long I account the time to pass below,
And brief my span of days ; yet sweet the same.
. . . . . .
Shrewdly hast thou contrived how not to die
For evermore now ; 'tis but still persuade
The wife for the time being—take thy place !
What, and thy friends who would not do the like
These dost thou carp at, craven thus thyself?
Crouch and be silent, craven ! Comprehend
That, if thou lovest so that life of thine,
Why every body loves his own life, too ;
So, good words henceforth ! If thou speak us ill,
Many and true an ill thing shalt thou hear !
Cho. Too much evil spoke
On both sides !

But the unspeakable wrangle runs on page after page, for all the sound admonition of the chorus. Admetus at last bids the funeral train proceed.

We give now enough of what Mr. Browning, by way of connection, puts into the mouth of Balaustion, to furnish our readers a hint of the decidedly modern psychological treatment which this master in that kind applies to the present production of Euripides. Admetus is made to be undergoing a process of development toward better character. He will, according to Mr. Browning, be quite redeemed before all is done (Browning this, not Euripides):

> "So, the old selfish Pheres went his way,
> Case-hardened as he came ; and left the youth
> (Only half-selfish now, since sensitive)
> To go on learning by a light the more,
> As friends moved off, renewing dirge the while."

Here is the choric dirge from Euripides referred to:

> Unhappy in thy daring! Noble dame,
> Best of the good, farewell! With favoring face
> May Hermes the infernal, Hades too,
> Receive thee! And if there, ay, there, some touch
> Of further dignity await the good,
> Sharing with them, may'st thou sit throned by her
> The Bride of Hades, in companionship!

The funeral train now fairly on the way, the scene returns to Heracles in the house. The free manner of the guest displeased the servant detailed to wait upon him. This testy old fellow soliloquizes to the guest's disadvantage as follows, (we abridge:)

> . . . . . .
> Here am I helping make at home
> A guest, some fellow ripe for wickedness,
> Robber or pirate, while she goes her way
> Out of her house: and neither was it mine
> To follow in procession, nor stretch forth
> Hand, wave my lady dear a last farewell,
> Lamenting who to me and all of us
> Domestics was a mother: myriad harms
> She used to ward away from every one,
> And mollify her husband's ireful mood.
> I ask, then, do I justly hate or no
> This guest, this interloper on our grief?

There follows, in Mr. Browning's poem, a long passage of the English poet's own, very nobly idealizing and tranfiguring Heracles. All this changed Heracles is found, by a creative poetic eye, between the lines of Euripides—who himself simply makes Heracles speak out with rough good-humor to the vinegar-visaged attendant, thus:

> *Her.* Thou, there!
> Why look'st so solemn and so thought-absorbed?
> To guests, a servant should not sour-faced be,
> But do the honors with a mind urbane.
> . . . . . .

Give ear to me, then! For all flesh to die
Is nature's due; nor is there any one
Of mortals with assurance he shall last
The coming morrow: for, what's born of chance
Invisibly proceeds the way it will,
Not to be learned, no fortune-teller's prize.
This, therefore, having heard and known through me,
Gladden thyself! Drink! Count the day-by-day
Existence thine, and all the other—chance!
. . . . . .
Wilt not thou, then,—discarding overmuch
Mournfulness, do away with this shut door,
Come drink along with me, be-garlanded
This fashion? Do so—and—I well know what—
From this stern mood, this shrunk-up state of mind,
The pit-pat fall o' the flagon-juice down throat
Soon will dislodge thee from bad harborage!
. . . . . .

It soon comes out, for the enlightenment of Heracles, that it was Alcestis herself who had died. Heracles suffers a violent revulsion from gay to sad. He exclaims:

Her. But I divined it! seeing, as I did,
His eye that ran with tears, his close-clipt hair,
His countenance!
. . . . . .
And do I revel yet
With wreath on head? But—thou to hold thy peace,
Nor tell me what a woe oppressed my friend!
Where is he gone to bury her? Where am I
To go and find her?

Heracles takes his resolution. He will go to the tomb and rescue Alcestis yet. Here are his words:

Her. O much-enduring heart and hand of mine!
. . . . . .
I will go lie in wait for Death, black-stoled
King of the corpses! I shall find him, sure,
Drinking beside the tomb, o' the sacrifice:
And if I lie in ambuscade, and leap

Out of my lair, and seize—encircle him
Till one hand join the other round about—
There lives not who shall pull him out from me,
Rib-mauled, before he let the woman go!
But even say I miss the booty—say,
Death comes not to the boltered blood—why then
Down go I, to the unsunned dwelling-place
O' Koré and the king there—make demand,
Confident I shall bring Alkestis back,
So as to put her in the hands of him
My host, that housed me, never drove me off:
Though stricken with sore sorrow, hid the stroke,
Being a noble heart and honoring me!

. . . . . .

Meantime the procession returns from the grave. With admirable amplification of pathetic speech and circumstance, Euripides displays the grief of Admetus revisiting his "chambers emptied of delight." The chorus intervene with their exasperating commonplace of consolation. They end by chanting a high strain in celebration of the inexorableness of Necessity. This we give in the rhymed version of Potter:

STROPHE I.

My venturous foot delights
To tread the Muses' arduous heights:
Their hallow'd haunts I love to explore,
And listen to their lore:
Yet never could my searching mind
Aught, like Necessity, resistless find:
No herb, of sovereign power to save,
Whose virtues Orpheus joy'd to trace,
And wrote them in the rolls of Thrace;
Nor all that Phœbus gave,
Instructing the Asclepian train,
When various ills the human frame assail,
To heal the wound, to soothe the pain,
'Gainst her stern force avail.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Of all the powers divine
Alone none dares approach her shrine:

To her no hallow'd image stands,
No altar she commands ;
In vain the victim's blood would flow ;
She never deigns to hear the suppliant now.
Never to me may'st thou appear,
Dread goddess, with severer mien,
That oft, in life's past tranquil scene,
Thou hast been known to wear.
By thee Jove works his stern behest :
Thy force subdues ev'n Scythia's stubborn steel ;
Nor ever does thy rugged breast
The touch of pity feel.

STROPHE II.

And now, with ruin pleased,
On thee, O king, her hands have seized,
And bound thee in her iron chain :
Yet her fell force sustain ;
For, from the gloomy realms of night
No tears recall the dead to life's sweet light ;
No virtue, though to heaven allied,
Saves from the inevitable doom :
Heroes and sons of gods have died,
And sunk into the tomb.
Dear, while our eyes her presence bless'd ;
Dear, in the gloomy mansions of the dead :
Most generous she, the noblest, best,
Who graced thy nuptial bed.

ANTISTROPHE II.

Thy wife's sepulchral mound
Deem not as common worthless ground,
That swells their breathless bodies o'er,
Who die, and are no more.
No : be it honor'd as a shrine
Raised high, and hallow'd to some power divine.
The traveler, as he passes by,
Shall thither bend his devious way ;
With reverence gaze, and with a sigh
Smite on his breast, and say,
"She died of old to save her lord ;
Now bless'd among the bless'd. Hail, power revered ;

To us thy wonted grace afford!"
Such vows shall be preferr'd.
But see, Admetus, to thy house, I ween,
Alcmena's son bends his returning steps.

By this time Heracles has come back with a genuine surprise prepared for Admetus. But there is considerable suspense of the agreeable shock. This provides for a prolonged enjoyment, on the part of spectators, who watch the scene between Heracles and Admetus with the delicious interest of persons admitted to the secret of a gracious plot in process of unfolding before their eyes. First, Heracles upbraids Admetus for not having been frank with him about the death of Alcestis. He then mysteriously adverts to the woman he has brought with him. In a contest just waged by him, he had won her for prize. Would Admetus be good enough to take charge of her while he (Heracles) should be absent on his next adventure? But Admetus demurs. He urges various reasons why it were not meet. Glancing at the woman's form, he exclaims at her resemblance to Alcestis. Then to Heracles he says, entreating:

Admetos. Ah, me!
Take—by the gods!—this woman from my sight,
Lest thou undo me, the undone before!
Since I seem—seeing her—as if I saw
My own wife! And confusions cloud my heart,
And from my eyes the springs break forth! Ah, me,
Unhappy!—How I taste, for the first time,
My misery in all its bitterness!

The chorus venture to advise in favor of taking the woman. The interchange following of short, generally one-line, remarks between Heracles and Admetus must be given our readers. This brisk back and forth is a favorite form of dialogue with the Greek tragedians. Readers may see it imitated in Milton's Mask of Comus. Also, in Milton's Samson Agonistes—which is almost Greek tragedy itself reproduced,

alike in form and in power, though, by the Hebrew spirit of the author and of the subject, the English poem is unavoidably qualified and heightened with a characteristic difference. The Atalanta in Calydon of Mr. Swinburne is another modern antique worthy to be studied and—herein unlike many of this gifted but not scrupulous poet's productions—morally not unfit to be studied. Now the dialogue of approach to the final disclosure. We choose for this the rendering of Potter, which reproduces better the effect of the single lines in the original Greek:

Herakles. O that from Jove I had the power to bring
Back from the mansions of the dead thy wife
To heaven's fair light, that grace achieving for thee!
Admetos. I know thy friendly will: but how can this
Be done? Tho dead return not to this light!
Her. Check, then, thy swelling griefs; with reason rule them.
Adm. How easy to advise, but hard to bear!
Her. What would it profit shouldst thou always groan?
Adm. I know it; but I am in love with grief.
Her. Love to the dead calls forth the ceaseless tear.
Adm. O, I am wretched more than words can speak.
Her. A good wife hast thou lost: who can gainsay it?
Adm. Never can life be pleasant to me more.
Her. Thy sorrow now is new; time will abate it.
Adm. Time, say'st thou? Yes, the time that brings me death.
Her. Some young and lovely bride will bid it cease.
Adm. No more; what say'st thou? Never would I think—
Her. Wilt thou still lead a lonely, widow'd life?
Adm. Never shall other woman share my bed.
Her. And think'st thou this will aught avail the dead?
Adm. This honor is her due where'er she be.
Her. This hath my praise, though near allied to frenzy.
Adm. Praise me or not, I ne'er will wed again.
Her. I praise thee that thou art faithful to thy wife.
Adm. Though dead, if I betray her, may I die!
Her. Well, take this noble lady to thy house.
Adm. No, by thy father Jove let me entreat thee.
Her. Not to do this would be the greatest wrong.
Adm. To do it would with anguish rend my heart.

Her. Let me prevail; this grace may find its meed.
Adm. O that thou never hadst received this prize!
Her. Yet in my victory thou art victor with me.
Adm. 'Tis nobly said! yet let this woman go.
Her. If she must go, she shall: but must she go?
Adm. She must, if I incur not thy displeasure.
Her. There is a cause that prompts my earnestness.
Adm. Thou hast prevail'd, but much against my will.
Her. The time will come when thou wilt thank me for it.
Adm. Well, if I must receive her, lead her in.
Her. Charge servants with her! No, that must not be.
Adm. Lead her thyself then, if thy will incline thee.
Her. No, to thy hand alone will I commit her.
Adm. I touch her not; but she hath leave to enter.
Her. I shall intrust her only to thy hand.
Adm. Thou dost constrain me, king, against my will.
Her. Venture to stretch thy hand, and touch the stranger's.
Adm. I touch her as I would the headless Gorgon.
Her. Hast thou her hand?
Adm. I have.
Her. Then hold her safe;
Hereafter thou wilt say the son of Jove
Hath been a generous guest. View now her face:
See if she bears resemblance to thy wife;
And thus made happy, bid farewell to grief.
Adm. O gods, what shall I say? 'Tis marvelous,
Exceeding hope. See I my wife indeed,
Or doth some god distract me with false joy?
Her. In very deed dost thou behold thy wife.
Adm. See that it be no phantom from beneath.
Her. Make not thy friend one that evokes the shades.
Adm. And do I see my wife, whom I entomb'd?
Her. I marvel not that thou art diffident.
Adm. I touch her; may I speak to her as living?
Her. Speak to her, thou hast all thy heart could wish.
Adm. Dearest of women, do I see again
That face, that person? This exceeds all hope.
I never thought that I should see thee more.
Her. Thou hast her; may no god be envious to thee!
Adm. O be thou bless'd, thou generous son of Jove!
Thy father's might protect thee! Thou alone

Hast raised her to me: from the realms below
How hast thou brought her to the light of life?
Her. I fought with him that lords it o'er the shades.
Adm. Where with the gloomy tyrant didst thou fight?
Her. I lay in wait, and seized him at the tomb.
Adm. But wherefore doth my wife thus speechless stand?
Her. It is not yet permitted that thou hear
Her voice addressing thee, till from the gods
That rule beneath she be unsanctified
With hallow'd rites, and the third morn return.
But lead her in: and, as thou art just in all
Besides, Admetus, see thou reverence strangers.
Farewell: I go to achieve the destined toil
For the imperial son of Sthenelus.
Adm. Abide with us, and share my friendly hearth.
Her. That time will come again: this demands speed.
Adm. Success attend thee: safe mayest thou return
Now to my citizens I give in charge,
And to each chief, that for this bless'd event
They institute the dance, let the steer bleed,
And the rich altars, as they pay their vows,
Breathe incense to the gods; for now I rise
To better life, and grateful own the blessing.

The chorus have the last word and moralize the action, thus:

Cho. With various hand the gods dispense our fates:
Now showering various blessings, which our hopes
Dared not aspire to; now controlling ills
We deem'd inevitable: thus the god,
To these hath given an end exceeding thought.
Such is the fortune of this happy day.

Mr. Browning, in his "Balaustion's Adventure," follows up what he in his title calls his "transcript of Euripides," with a tentative poem of his own on the same theme. In it he seeks to "adorn and hide" the bareness and baldness of the ancient legend by a very clever psychological interpretation, distinctively modern, and delightfully racy of this particular writer's individual genius. We commend Mr. Browning's whole poem to our readers' attention.

There is a wide, and even violent, difference of opinion among good authorities on the merits of Euripides. Some critics consider him essentially melodramatic in quality, rather than truly tragic. These find in him a sudden and rapid degeneration and decline of Greek tragedy from the brief and splendid culmination reached in Sophocles. Other critics, on the contrary, consider Euripides hardly inferior to his rivals. These more friendly judges claim for their poet a greater breadth of human sympathy, to compensate for his less height and purity and power of poetry, as compared with Æschylus and Sophocles. Mrs. Browning's stanza, quoted by Mr. Browning as a kind of motto to his Balaustion's Adventure, expresses the sympathetically appreciative view of Euripides :

> Our Euripides, the human,
> With his droppings of warm tears,
> And his touches of things common
> Till they rose to touch the spheres.

Euripides is said to have been Milton's favorite among the Greek tragedians. "Sad Electra's poet," Milton calls him, in one of his sonnets—this, from the title "Electra" of a tragedy of his. (Sophocles treats the same subject under the same title). In another of his sonnets, that on his deceased wife, Milton has the following allusion :

> Methought I saw my late espousèd saint
> Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave.

Goethe stood stoutly up for Euripides against Schlegel and other destructive critics among the Germans. Mr. J. A. Symonds, in his admirable "Studies of the Greek Poets," and Mr. Mahaffy, in his "History of Classical Greek Literature," do likewise. His contemporary, Aristophanes, the terrible Athenian satirist, sworn foe ever to Euripides, no doubt did much with his ridicule to set the fashion of adverse criticism that has prevailed so long and so widely. But

over against the hostility of Aristophanes may be set the well-known friendship of Socrates for the poet. On the whole, Euripides has support that may well justify him in smiling at his enemies. And, in the face of whatever criticism, he has constantly persisted a popular poet.

The Alcestis, we owe it alike to the poet and to our readers to explain, is one among those dramas of Euripides in which the model, bequeathed to him by his seniors, of severe and pure tragedy, is most frankly departed from, and approach is most decidedly made toward that mixed character of the play, part tragic and part comic, familiar to us moderns, for instance, in the works of Shakespeare. There are dramas in Euripides far more unmixedly tragic than the Alcestis. From one of these, the Me-de'a, a powerful but disagreeable piece, we take a celebrated chorus in part eulogistic of Athens. With this extract, given in the rhymed rendering of Potter, we dismiss Euripides, and with Euripides the Greek tragedists, from our hands. We regret that our space has forbidden a fuller and more various exhibition of these great writers. But readers may feel compensated with the reflection that, even as the case stands, they have had more of the Greek tragedies than it usually falls to the lot of the college graduate to have obtained in the course of his regular classroom work. Here is the promised chorus:

STROPHE I.

Lo, where the bless'd Cecropian race,
Through many a rolling age renown'd,
Who from the gods their lineage trace,
And their unconquer'd sacred ground,
Nurtured in wisdom's noblest lore,
The purest air delighted breathe
The clearest skies beneath,
Where, as they say, in times of yore
The Muses from Pieria's chaste retreat
Planted their loved Harmonia's golden seat.

ANTISTROPHE I.

And where Cephisus through the vale
Labors his beauteous-winding way,
As Venus drew the freshing gale,
She bade the gladsome Zephyrs play,
And wave their light wings o'er the land:
Then as the roseate wreath she twined,
Her fragrant locks to bind,
She sent her sons, a decent band,
Near Wisdom's hallow'd seat to hold their place,
And breathe on virtue their divinest grace.

STROPHE II.

How shall these sacred streams, this state,
This town, though prompt, when Friendship calls,
To ope each hospitable gate,
Thee in its bowers, its glades, its walls
Receive, from this unhallow'd deed
Polluted with thy children's gore?
Ah, spare them, we implore:
Let not their guiltless bosoms bleed!
Behold us prostrate at thy feet; forbear,
Thy sons; let friendship plead, and pity spare!

ANTISTROPHE II.

What rashness, fired with frantic rage,
Urged to these thoughts accursed thy mind?
How would thy daring hands engage
To do the deed thy soul design'd?
The children by the mother slain!
Couldst thou with tearless eyes behold
In blood thy offspring roll'd?
Or can thy ruthless heart sustain
To see thy kneeling sons for mercy sue,
Yet in their blood thy horrid hands imbrue.

The clear beauty of the first part seems almost unnaturally joined to the hideous ugliness of the close of this choice ode—a close wherein a glimpse is afforded to the reader of the revolting deed in which the action of the tragedy culminates.

We cannot perhaps provide a better epilogue, as we now take final leave of the three great Grecians joined in their secure immortality of associate fame, than by quoting here the appreciation of them which Mrs. Browning has, with fine discrimination of their several qualities, picturesquely rhymed for us in her poem, all Greek, entitled "Wine of Cyprus." If it were not that we must interpose next some notice of a strongly contrasted genius in Aristophanes, we might at the same time, by carrying forward our quotation from Mrs. Browning to the completing of the stanza, usher into presence through her verse the idyllic poets of Syracuse and the splendor-loving lyrist of Thebes, who will shortly command our attention. On the whole, we will, for the moment, ignore the disjunctive link of Aristophanes, and let Mrs. Browning speak as well of Theocritus and Bion, and of Pindar, as of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Her poem is an epistolary one, addressed to a former companion of hers in Greek study, and is reminiscent of experiences common to the two fellow-students:

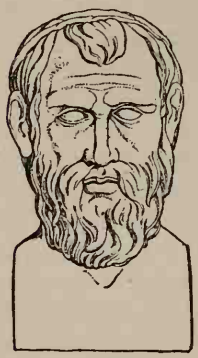
O, our Æschylus, the thunderous!
  How he drove the bolted breath
Through the cloud, to wedge it ponderous
  In the gnarled oak beneath.
O, our Sophocles, the royal,
  Who was born to monarch's place,
And who made the whole world loyal,
  Less by kingly power than grace.

Our Euripides, the human,
  With his droppings of warm tears,
And his touches of things common
  Till they rose to touch the spheres!
Our Theocritus, our Bion,
  And our Pindar's shining goals!
These were cup-bearers undying,
  Of the wine that's meant for souls.

VIII.

ARISTOPHANES.

ARISTOPHANES stands alone as representative to us of Greek comedy. There were many other comic poets in Greece—that is, in Athens, for almost it might be said that in literature Athens was Greece—of whom some were considerable enough in genius and in reputation to dispute successfully the palm with Aristophanes; but Aristophanes enjoys the fortune of surviving in a number (eleven) of his productions, while all his peers and rivals have vanished from human memory in every thing but perhaps a name surrounded with its vain tradition of pristine renown.



ARISTOPHANES.

We could hardly let this volume appear without a chapter inscribed by title to Aristophanes. But we shall feel it necessary to make this our monument to his genius hardly more than a cenotaph in his honor. A handful, nay, a pinch, of dust is all that will here be collected to suggest the literary remains of Aristophanes. Comedy is in its nature one of the most fugacious of all literary forms. Incredible archæological learning and pains have been expended in the endeavor to revive the knowledge of history and of manners needful to the intelligent appreciation of Aristophanes. But the truth is, that the spirit of the Aristophanic comedy was an excessively volatile spirit. Long ago it escaped hopelessly, hopelessly evanished, into the illimitable air. Nobody will ever gather it thence again and restore it to the body of literature which once it made quick with a sparkle of vivacity as brilliant as it was evanescent, but which it, fleeing

away, left for the most part irredeemably stale, flat, and unprofitable.

Still the great features of the comedy of Aristophanes remain and may be studied. Besides, there are particular passages here and there vivified yet with a flavor appreciably pungent, and not entirely repugnant, to modern taste.

The feature that strikes one most is probably the enormous indulgence of the grotesque and fantastic that Aristophanes displays. Verisimilitude, probability, is violated with the utmost conceivable license. Indeed, it seems to be a law of the Aristophanic comedy to let fancy run absolutely riot. There is something of the spirit of the carnival present in it all. The broadest farce, the most Titanic sport, invention the most capricious, personal abuse without limit, coarseness, incredible coarseness, abound. The coarseness is a coarseness so utterly devoid of scruple that, insinuation and indirection quite dispensed with, indecency flaunts itself naked, not only without shame, but without consciousness, or rather with a staggering air of actual piety—as if lewdness were religion. Every imaginable excess reigns here and revels.

The idea just suggested of piety present in Athenian comedy to sanction and sanctify lewdness, must not be taken to be rhetorical hyperbole. It is literal fact. The comedies of Athens were always presented as a part of the great Dionysiac festivals occurring at Athens three times each year. The wild extravagances in conduct that made up these festivals of Bacchus were not things winked at by public sentiment, but things enjoined by public sentiment and encouraged. They became, indeed, portion and parcel of the national religion. It was an illustration of what Paul says of the heathen world: "As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient." Conceive the confusion of moral ideas implied in such a state of things!

Vice not simply practiced, but practiced as virtue! Orgies of uncleanness celebrated for worship of God! The awful admonitory words of Jesus recur, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

The modern comedy turns chiefly on social ideas and manners. The ancient Greek comedy was mainly political in motive and interest. It fulfilled, in a measure, the same function as that of the partisan newspaper press of our times. The leading "editorial," instead of being printed and circulated, was enacted and exhibited on the stage. But the paragraph, the squib, the caricature, were also contained in the comedy. And then there was pure fun in it; that is, fun for the unmixed sake of the fun. All was carefully addressed to the taste of the people at large. This accounts, in part at least, for the broadness of the humor, and the lowness of the moral tone, prevailing in Athenian comedy. The audience was not select. On the contrary, it was the most miscellaneous possible, for it included the entire body of the citizens. Every Athenian citizen had a seat provided for him in the theatre, and it was an exception if every citizen was not personally present to occupy his seat. On the whole, it is remarkable that comedy, religiously wicked, piously profane, like the Athenian, and designed to be strongly pronounced enough in savor to satisfy the appetite of twenty thousand promiscuous spectators and auditors, should have been—we cannot say so little unchaste, for more unchaste it could hardly have been, but—so high in intellectual quality as it was.

Of course it is impossible to illustrate with example the nastiness of Aristophanes. And paradoxical though it be thought, we shall have in candor to say that the nastiness is less an offense to the moral, than it is to the æsthetic, sense of the modern reader. There is no allurement to sin in it. It is quite too frank—too little insidious. Mr. Swinburne, at his worst, is far more evil than at his worst is Aristoph-

anes. Accepted modern operas too there are, more truly immoral in influence than are the scandalizingly free and roystering comedies of ancient Athens. In inseparable association of thought with the elegant voluptuousness of the court of Louis XIV., Burke said that vice lost half its evil by losing all its grossness. For application to the present case, we need exactly to reverse this shallow though brilliant rhetorical sophistry of sentiment, and say, that vice, in the comedy of Aristophanes, lost half its evil by keeping all its grossness.

The political element in the comedy of Aristophanes, involved as this is in personal and local allusion no longer intelligible, is more completely beyond modern appreciation than is the purely intellectual and literary element. Creon was the favorite butt of Aristophanes the political satirist. Of Aristophanes, the critic and the wit in literature and philosophy, the most illustrious targets were Euripides and Socrates. The Frogs, and The Clouds, respectively, name two comedies that, being at the same time masterpieces of their author, retain for us more interest than perhaps any other of his works. The comedy of The Frogs makes game of Euripides, while Socrates is set up as a laughing-stock in the comedy of The Clouds. The Knights is the piece which chiefly pays the comedian's compliments to Creon. The perfectly frank, and perfectly transparent, though anonymous, abuse with which Aristophanes treats his ideal demagogue, may be judged from the following extract. Mr. Frere is our translator:

Close around him, and confound him, the confounder of us all;
Pelt him, pummel him, and maul him; rummage, ransack, overhaul him,
Overbear him, and outbawl him; bear him down, and bring him under.
Bellow like a burst of thunder, Robber! harpy! sink of plunder!
Rogue and villain! rogue and cheat! rogue and villain, I repeat!
Oftener than I can repeat it, has the rogue and villain cheated.
Close around him, left and right; spit upon him, spurn and smite:
Spit upon him as you see; spurn and spit at him like me.

There is, by the way, rarely any thing in the nature of a plot to one of Aristophanes's comedies. Generally the play is a succession of scenes, or *tableaux vivants*. The machinery employed, the situations presented, furnish a great part of the amusement. There is no attempt at working out, through successive stages, a surprising development to be sprung upon you at the close.

In The Clouds, Socrates is made to do duty as a representative sophist, and the sophists are the object of the comedian's ridicule. Much speculation has been indulged in as to the reason why Aristophanes should have put Socrates into this part, since Socrates was, in fact, always opposing the sophists. For ourselves, we suspect that exactly this was Aristophanes's reason for the liberty he took with his friend Socrates. It would have an irresistibly comic effect to invert well-understood relations in this broadly obvious way. The absurdity of giving on the stage the familiar and naturally almost comic face and figure of Socrates to the representative sophist—a character with whom that philosopher was understood to be incessantly at war—this would be a joke level to the capacity of the least enlightened Athenian. Then, in Socrates thus represented, to jumble confusedly together the function of the sophist—namely, undertaking to prove the negative or the affirmative at choice of any proposition whatever, with the function of the true philosopher—namely, seeking truth and wisdom—such, we submit, was the comic design of Aristophanes in this play of The Clouds. Besides, it must be admitted that there really was enough, at times, of the true sophist in Socrates to add the equivalent necessary of verisimilitude to the comic representation.

The opening scene of The Clouds presents a bedroom in which a father and a son are sleeping. The father waking tries in vain to fall asleep again. Thoughts of pecuniary embarrassment disturb his mind. Bills are coming due that he knows not how to meet. His son, meantime, talks in his

sleep of horses and races. The son is at length roused by the sire, and the two sally forth together. The old gentleman has an idea. His son shall go to the "thinking-shop" of Socrates the sophist, and there learn how, by rhetoric, to evade the payment of the paternal debts. But the graceless young rascal will not go. The father, at last, is fain to go himself. A student admits him into the house. After a little preliminary conversation, the visitor catches sight of a human figure suspended from the ceiling in a basket. Now a bit of Aristophanes in his own words:

Stranger. Who hangs dangling in the basket yonder?
Student. HIMSELF.
Str. And who's himself?
Stud. Why, Socrates.
Str. Ho, Socrates! Call him, you fellow—call loud.
Stud. Call him yourself—I've got no time for calling.
(*Exit indoors.*)
Str. Ho, Socrates! sweet, darling Socrates!
Soc. Why callest thou me, poor creature of a day?
Str. First tell me, pray, what are you doing up there?
Soc. I walk in air, and contemplate the sun.
Str. O, that's the way that you despise the gods—
You get so near them on your perch there—eh?
Soc. I never could have found out things divine
Had I not hung my mind up thus and mixed
My subtle intellect with its kindred air.
Had I regarded such things from below
I had learnt nothing. For the earth absorbs
Into itself the moisture of the brain—
It is the very same case with water-cresses.
Str. Dear me! so water-cresses grow by thinking!

Socrates, having learned the errand of his visitor, chants a song of invitation to the Clouds to descend for the old gentleman's help. The descent of the Clouds is attended with a gentle roll of thunder. The Clouds sing together while they, probably still invisible, approach. Their song is a lyric much admired. Mr. Collins in his volume on Aristoph-

anes (Ancient Classics for English Readers) gives the following version of it :

(CHORUS OF CLOUDS *in the distance.*)

Eternal clouds !
Rise we to mortal view,
Embodied in bright shapes of dewy sheen,
Leaving the depths serene
Where our loud-sounding Father Ocean dwells,
For the wood-crowned summits of the hills :
Thence shall our glance command
The beetling crags which sentinel the land,
The teeming earth,
The crops we bring to birth ;
Thence shall we hear
The music of the ever-flowing streams,
The low, deep thunders of the booming sea.
Lo, the bright Eye of Day unwearied beams !
Shedding our veil of storms
From our immortal forms,
We scan with keen-eyed gaze this nether sphere.

Readers of Shelley will be reminded of his beautiful and powerful poem of "The Cloud." The Clouds, drawing nearer, sing again, Socrates meantime lying prostrate with adoration, and the stranger convulsed with comic terror at the accompanying thunder. The Clouds "materialize" as fleecy-frocked maidens, floating airily in, to the number of twenty-four. The old gentleman turns out to be a poor pupil, and does not get on. The son is finally prevailed upon to go in place of his father. The father introduces him to Socrates with pride :

He was so very clever always, naturally ;
When he was but so high, now, he'd build mud-houses,
Cut out a boat, make a cart of an old shoe,
And frogs out of pomegranate-stones—quite wonderful !

We are bound to say that in the passage following, descriptive of the discipline through which the young man goes,

there is something to inspire one's respect. The Just Argument and the Unjust are personified and impersonated on the stage. It is a kind of Aristophanic version of the sophist Prod'i-cus's noble allegory of the "Choice of Heracles." The two Arguments dispute. The Just Argument holds language like this:

> Cast in thy lot, O youth, with me, and choose the better paths—
> So shalt thou hate the Forum's prate, and shun the lazy baths;
> Be shamed for what is truly shame, and blush when shame is said,
> And rise up from thy seat in hall before the hoary head;
> Be duteous to thy parents, to no base act inclined,
> But keep fair Honor's image deep within thine heart enshrined;
> And speak no rude, irreverent word against the father's years,
> Whose strong hand led thine infant steps and dried thy childhood's tears.

But the Unjust Argument answers and prevails. Here is a specimen of the Aristophanico-Socratic style in which the dialogue is carried forward:

Unjust A. Come, now, from what class do our lawyers spring?
Just A. Well—from the blackguards.
Unj. A. I believe you. Tell me
Again, what are our tragic poets?
Just A. Blackguards.
Unj. A. Good; and our public orators?
Just A. Blackguards all.
Unj. A. D'ye see now, how absurd and utterly worthless
Your arguments have been? And now look round—
(*turning to the audience*)
Which class amongst our friends here seems most numerous?
Just A. I'm looking.
Unj. A. Well, now tell me what you see.
Just. A. (*after gravely and attentively examining the rows of spectators*)
The blackguards have it, by a large majority.
There's one, I know—and yonder there's another—
And there, again, that fellow with long hair.

Of course such buffoonery would bring down the house. The Just Argument throws up the case. The son is now

crammed for his contest with the father's creditors. He easily beats them all out of court. But the father's delight is seriously modified when his son makes an unexpected use of his new accomplishment. The hopeful youth thrashes his own father, and proceeds with easy volubility to justify himself in the act. The aggrieved parent seeks his revenge on Socrates and the Clouds. Taking with him his slaves, he carries the torch to the "thinking-shop." The incendiary old gentleman, perched on his ladder, to the students asking him what he is about there, replies:

Holding a subtle disputation with the rafters.

And Socrates himself, at length aroused by the noise, is, with a retort turned upon himself of his own explanation as to his situation in the hanging-basket, told by the sarcastic father:

I walk in air and contemplate the sun.

Mr. Browning in his "Aristophanes' Apology" has a long passage descriptive of an imaginary, though entirely verisimilar, visit of the comedian made, under privilege of the Dionysiac or Bacchic festival, to the house of Balaustion. He comes a drunken reveler—and now is introduced by the way a striking, but not strikingly luminous, portrait in words of the man as he is supposed by the English poet to appear on the occasion. We refer curious readers to Mr. Browning's volume, and therewith, rendering to the Grecian's genius a homage qualified with sorrow, more than with blame, for the use that he made of his genius, we bow Aristophanes out of presence. He is eminently an author to be studied less for delight, than for melancholy instruction on the state of morals and of manners prevalent in the most polished nation of the ancient pagan world.

We were letting Aristophanes go; but, stay, he shall, before going, sing for us one pretty song of his own from the comedy of The Birds. Dr. Howard Crosby, an accomplished Greek

scholar, and, as our readers will see, a poet, has kindly furnished us a version of the song—in the English words of which the Athenian singer will be understood and appreciated :

Muse of the bushy haunt,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
That on the valley's breast,
Or on the mountain's crest,
So versatile, art wont
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
With me the echoes to arouse,
Seated among the ashen boughs,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
With active throat
I wake my note
Of holy song to Pan's high praise,
Or Rhea else receives my lays,
Tu-tu, tu-tu, tu-tu, tu-whoo !
As the bee that tastes the flower
Songful makes the busy hour,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
Such is the mingled song,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
The swans with moving wing
To great Apollo sing
The bending reeds among,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo
Upon the banks so fair and green
Where shining Hebrus flows between,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !
Through air the song
Is borne along;
The beasts are silent as the grave,
Nor breathing winds disturb the wave,
Tu-tu, tu-tu, tu-tu, tu-whoo !
Pleasing Heav'n, it kings confuses,—
Grieves the Graces and the Muses,
Tu-whit, tu-whit, tu-whoo !

IX.

PINDAR,

SAPPHO, SIMONIDES.

HOMER is not more unquestionably first in fame among the epic poets of antiquity than among ancient lyric poets is Pindar. Something beyond even this may be said. Pindar's renown is perhaps more solitary in its supremacy than is even the renown of Homer. Homer has been followed by Virgil, Dante, Milton, who vie with him in glory as epic poets. But there is no fellow to Pindar, in any race or any age, to divide with him the throne of empire in lyric song. It was true, and it remains true, what Gray sang of Pindar as "the Theban Eagle"

PINDAR.

Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure deep of air.

Pindar was of Thebes in Bœotia, a country celebrated in proverb for the mental dullness of its inhabitants. Pindar may fairly be judged to take away that reproach. He flourished during perhaps three quarters of a century, from about 522 B. C. He was of aristocratic blood, and he was aristocratic in feeling. Little is known of his life. There is a tradition, which one likes to believe trustworthy, that he had a Theban countrywoman, Co-rin'na, who fairly beat him in a poetical contest waged between the two when he

was young. Afterward, so the legend goes on, he brought her a poem of his, sown thick with Theban mythology. She had herself advised this resource to the ambitious young poet; but, "You should sow with the hand, not with the sack," was her criticism on his over-profusion. Tennyson alludes in The Princess to "fair Corinna's triumph."

Pindar was the most fortunate of poets. Popular everywhere, he was also the pet of noblemen and princes. His poetry was all occasional, that is, written for occasions, and it was written to order for hire. The most of what remains consists of triumphal odes celebrating victories won in the great national games of Greece. These odes are divided, somewhat arbitrarily, into four classes, named respectively, Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian, Nemæan, from the different local names given to the Grecian games of chief celebrity. The ode would be rendered either on the occasion itself of the victory, or afterward, perhaps on the return of the victor to his native city. It was accompanied with music and with choral dance. With the irreparable loss of these accompaniments to the poetry, and with the equally irreparable, and still greater, loss of the circumstance and sentiment that decorated and inspired the original occasion—with the loss, we say, of these things, the bloom of the splendor of Pindar's verse has irrecoverably faded. There has passed away a glory from the earth.

Pindar had the audacity of genius. He shrank from nothing arduous or dangerous that tempted him. He soared —but it was not with the wing of Ic'a-rus—into the region of the sun. His figures are bold to the verge of the inconceivable. This makes him a very difficult writer to translate. The English poet, Cowley, who made some odes that he called Pindaric, said, about doing Pindar into English, that, to render him literally, would make the public cry out, It is one madman translating another. Pindar is not often read in the ordinary college course.

There is a whole library of English Pindaric translation in prose and verse. The version most praised by the best judges is that of H. F. Cary, the translator of Dante. This version is in metre. We shall present a specimen or two.

First, however, by example from another source, we wish to give our readers an idea of Pindar's dithyrambics. These constitute a wild, stormy, tumultuous metre, in which we have only fragments remaining from the lyre of Pindar. Mr. H. N. Coleridge, nephew of Samuel Taylor Coleridge the poet, translated a dithyrambic fragment of our author, in the course of an admirable paper of his, appreciating Mr. Cary's version of Pindar, originally published some fifty years ago in the Quarterly Review. This fragment is an almost presumptuous ode of address to the Olympian divinities, inviting them to descend to the worship of men. Pindar, by the way, is reckoned one of the most sincerely devout religionists of the classic pagan world. Here is the fragment, as rendered by Mr. Coleridge :

Down to our dance, gods!
Come down from Olympus—
Hither descend!
Glory o'er Athens and joyance bestowing,
O light, as ye wont, in the forum o'erflowing,
Where the crowds, and the chorus, and sacrifice blend!
Lo, they come! Now the violet-coronals bring,
And pure honey dew-drops
Fresh gather'd in spring.

See me advancing
Under Jove's guidance
Singing divine!—
'Tis the ivy-clad Boy!—God Bromius we name him;
With a cry and a shout Eriboas we claim him!
O! begotten of mother of old Cadmus' line
In the mighty embrace of omnipotent sire—
I come from afar off
To lead thy bright quire!

For the new palm-bud
Caught glance from the prophet
Of Nemea's strand;
When the nectarous plants felt the spring-tide sweet-smelling,
What time the young hours oped the ports of their dwelling!
Now the violet blooms are chance-flung on the land,
And the rose and the rose-leaf are wreath'd in the hair,
And voices and pipings
Ring loud in the air!

S. T. Coleridge has a "Visit of the Gods: Imitated from Schiller," with which the foregoing may be compared. Of both Schiller and Coleridge Pindar is the original.

We next give, using Cary's version, Pindar's celebrated hymn to the Graces. A "soft Lydian air" the poem is:

O ye, ordained by lot to dwell
Where Cephisian waters well;
And hold your fair retreat
'Mid herd of coursers beautiful and fleet,
Renownèd queens, that take your rest
In Orchomenus the blest,
Guarding with ever-wakeful eye
The Minyans' high-born progeny;—
To you my votive strains belong:
List, Graces, to your suppliant's song!
For all delightful things below,
All sweet, to you their being owe;
And at your hand their blessings share
The wise, the splendid, and the fair.

Nor without the holy Graces,
The gods, in those supernal places,
Their dances or their banquets rule:
Dispensers they of all above,
Throughout the glorious court of Jove;
Where each has placed her sacred stool
By the golden-bow'd Apollo,
Whom in his harpings clear they follow;
And the high majestic state
Of their Eternal Father venerate.

Daughters of heaven ;—Aglaia, thou,
Darting splendors from thy brow ;
With musical Euphrosyne,—
Be present. Nor less call I thee,
Tuneful Thalia, to look down
On the joyous rout, and own
Me their bard, who lead along,
For Asopichus the throng
Tripping light to Lydian song ;
And Minya for thy sake proclaim
Conqueress in the Olympic game.

Waft, Echo, now thy wing divine
To the black dome of Proserpine ;
And marking Cleodamus there,
Tell the glad tidings ;—how his son,
For him, hath crown'd his youthful hair
With plumes in Pisa's valley won.

With the dallying, long-lingering spirit of the foregoing strain, is sharply contrasted the swift sweep of the following lyric description of Bel-ler'o-phon's adventure with the celestial winged steed Peg'a-sus. This passage occurs in the course of a triumphal ode. Pindar's habitual method was to associate some suitable bit of mythology with his subject. In this way he secured variety of material for his various occasions. In the present case silence concerning the final fate of Bellerophon was dictated to the poet by his object. We use Cary again as translator :

Straight to the wingèd steed rushed on,
With sturdy step, Bellerophon ;
And seizing, to his cheek applied
The charm that sooth'd his swelling pride.
Them soon the azure depths enfold
Of ether waste and cold ;
Whence leveling his aim,
The Amazonian crew,
And Chimæra breathing flame,
And the Solymi he slew.

His final doom in silence past
Shall be by me conceal'd.
The ancient stalls of Jove at last
The courser, in Olympus, held.

The first Pythian ode is one of the series inscribed to Pindar's royal patron, Hi'e-ro of Syracuse, who had condescended to be a victor in a chariot-race. But in truth to contend in the Pythian games was rather a presumption than a condescension, even on the part of a king. It is impossible to exaggerate the enthusiasm with which the games of Greece were resorted to by competitors and spectators. To be crowned conqueror in one of the contests, not only was glorious for the conqueror himself, but the state or city to which the conqueror belonged was deemed to be glorified in the glory of her citizen. The present ode is long and elaborate. Cary:

O thou, whom Phœbus and the quire
Of violet-tressèd Muses own,
Their joint treasure, golden Lyre,
Ruling step with warbled tone,
Prelude sweet to festive pleasures;
Minstrels hail thy sprightly measures
Soon as shook from quivering strings,
Leading the choral bands, thy loud preamble rings.
In the mazes, steep'd, expire
Bolts of ever-flowing fire.
Jove's eagle on the sceptre slumbers,
Possess'd by thy enchanting numbers
On either side, his rapid wing,
Drops, entranc'd, the feather'd king;
Black vapor o'er his curvèd head,
Sealing his eyelids, sweetly shed;
Upheaving his moist back he lies
Held down with thrilling harmonies.
Mars the rough lance has laid apart,
And yields to song his stormy heart.
No god but of his mood disarm'd,
Is with thy tuneful weapons charm'd;

Soon as Latona's sapient son
And deep-zon'd Muses have their lays begun.
But whomsoever Jove
Hath look'd on without love,
Are anguish'd when they hear the voiceful sound;
Whether on land they be,
Or in the raging sea;
With him, outstretched on dread Tartarian bound,
Hundred-headed Typhon; erst
In famed Cilicia's cavern nurst;
Foe of the Gods; whose shaggy breast,
By Cuma's sea-beat mound, is prest;
Pent by plains of Sicily,
And that snow'd pillar heavenly high,
Ætna, nurse of ceaseless frost;
From whose cavern'd depths aspire,
In purest folds upwreathing, tost,
Fountains of approachless fire.
By day, a flood of smoldering smoke,
With sullen gleam, the torrents pour;
But in darkness, many a rock,
Crimson flame, along the shore,
Hurls to the deep with deaf'ning roar.
From that Worm, aloft are thrown
The wells of Vulcan, full of fear;
A marvel strange to look upon;
And, for the passing mariner,
As marvelous to hear;
How Ætna's top with umbrage black,
And soil, do hold him bound;
And by that pallet, all his back
Is scored with many a wound.
. . . . . .
Intent this man to praise,
I trust to whirl my javelin, brazen-tipt,
Not out of limit, yet that all who raise
A rival arm, shall be by far outstript.
. . . . . .
At close of glory's boastful day,
Sure as the mighty pass away,
To point their lives, alone remain
Recording tale and poet's strain.

Fades not the worth of Crœsus mild:
But Phalaris, with blood defil'd,
His brazen bull, his torturing flame,
Hand o'er alike to evil fame
In every clime. No tuneful string,
No voice, that makes the rafters ring,
Receive his name, in hall or bower,
When youth and joyance wing the hour

First prize to mortals, good success;
Next portion, good renown;
Whomever both conspire to bless,
He wins the highest crown.

Thomas Gray's fine lyric, The Progress of Poesy, by him expressly entitled A Pindaric Ode, is worthy of being studied, as at least giving something of the form, if kindled with little of the fire, of Pindar.

With a few sentences extracted from what Mr. H. N. Coleridge, in his article already mentioned in the Quarterly Review, has to say in general of Pindar and Pindar's poetry, we bring our necessarily brief presentation of Pindar to a close. Mr. Coleridge says:

"We never knew any scholar indifferent about Pindar. Either you love and venerate him—you carry him, as the noble Romana did, in your pocket—or you cannot away with him at all. There is no medium.

. . . . . .

"Pindar was no David, no Æschylus, no Milton; and, with Dante's power, he would have abhorred Dante's subject. But such as he was, he stood, and he stands, aloft and aloof — unsurpassable — inimitable — incomparable; not the very greatest or the most affecting of poets, in a universal sense—but the one permitted instance of perfection in his own arduous, although particular, line—the absolute master of lyric song."

If we seem by our order of treatment to make Sappho a

sort of pendant to Pindar, that is not to imply on her part either posteriority in time or inferiority in genius. Sappho, in fact, preceded Pindar by two generations, and her tradition is that of a poetical genius perhaps even surpassing him. A Tenth Muse, Plato calls her, and she remains to this day in general estimation among those entitled to adjudge her just rank, from the various trustworthy indications that survive, the foremost woman of genius in the world. The loss of her poems is probably the greatest loss that the literature of mankind ever suffered.

The familiar lines of Byron, (Lesbos was Sappho's native island,)

> The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
> Where burning Sappho loved and sung,

hint very well what, until lately, was the universal impression respecting the personality of Sappho. It is grateful now to think that common fame has done this woman wrong, and that nothing worthy of credence exists in the way of testimony to attaint the purity of her character. Mr. T. W. Higginson, in a most admirable paper published in the Atlantic Monthly for July, 1871, came handsomely forward, like the literary knight that he is, to vindicate her name before an audience more remote, more numerous, as certainly other far, than ever the poet herself could have dreamed, here in America. Mr. Higginson in this motion followed an initiative supplied by the German scholar Welcker. We, for our part, are going to believe that Sappho was a true woman as well as a great poet. We advise our readers to take their comfort in like belief.

SAPPHO.

Only one complete poem has come down to us from Sappho. There are various fragments preserved here and there, in critical literature, like the Rhetoric of Aristotle or the

treatise of Longinus on the Sublime. One of these fragments Byron has taken up, and given it a rich "sea-change" in sympathetic verse of his own:

O, Hesperus! thou bringest all good things;
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer;
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings;
The welcome stall to the o'er-labored steer;
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
Are gathered round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

The one surviving complete poem of Sappho's is her Hymn to Aphrodite. This is written in a peculiar stanza, called, from the name of the author, the Sapphic stanza. It is not an easy metre to write in English, especially under the constraint imposed by the necessities of translation. But Mr. Higginson has succeeded in making what seems to us a fine echo at once of sound and of sense, in the following Sapphic stanzas of English translation for the one precious whole production spared to us by time and chance from the genius of Sappho:

Beautiful-throned, immortal Aphrodite!
Daughter of Zeus, beguiler, I implore thee,
Weigh me not down with weariness and anguish,
O thou most holy!

Come to me now! if ever thou in kindness
Harkenedst my words,—and often hast thou harkened,
Heeding, and coming from the mansion golden
Of thy great Father,

Yoking thy chariot borne by thy most lovely
Consecrated birds, with dusky-tinted pinions,
Wafting swift wings from utmost heights of heaven
Through the mid-ether;

Swiftly they vanished, leaving thee, O goddess,
Smiling, with face immortal in its beauty,
Asking why I grieved, and why in utter longing
I had dared call thee;

Asking what I sought, thus hopeless in desiring,
'Wildered in brain, and spreading nets of passion
Alas, for whom? and saidst thou, "Who has harmed thee?
O my poor Sappho!

"Though now he flies, ere long he shall pursue thee;
Fearing thy gifts, he too in turn shall bring them;
Loveless to-day, to morrow he shall woo thee,
Though thou shouldst spurn him."

Thus seek me now, O holy Aphrodite!
Save me from anguish, give me all I ask for,
Gifts at thy hand; and thine shall be the glory,
Sacred protector!

The poet Alcæus was a contemporary and an acquaintance of Sappho's. Here is a fragment of address and reply exchanged between the poet and the poetess, which the prodigious learning, industry, and zeal of the German scholar Bergk, in his work on the lyric poets of Greece, has rescued for us from the scattered remains of ancient Greek literature. We use the translation supplied by Mr. Symonds; Alcæus says:

Violet-crowned, pure, sweet-smiling Sappho! I want to say something, but shame prevents me.

Sappho replies:

If thy wishes were fair and noble, and thy tongue designed not to utter what is base, shame would not cloud thine eyes, but thou wouldst speak thy just desires.

This is all we have of their own to build on against the twain in their mutual relation. Let us no longer believe that any thing dishonorable, at least to the woman, is to be read into these few words. Sappho wrote in the Æolic dialect. Pindar chiefly in the Doric. The two respectively may be taken to exemplify the distinction alluded to by Milton in his line,

Æolian charms and Dorian lyrick odes.

Si-mon'i-des, too, was an earlier poet than Pindar, but he survives only in a few fragments, or else in very brief epigrams. He was, like Pindar, a hireling poet, in the sense of being at the service of such patrons as were willing to subsidize his muse. In other words, he was poet-laureate, not, like Lord Tennyson, on a royal yearly stipend, but, as the commercial phrase is, by the job. If we may trust Aristotle, he was, upon occasion, spirited as to the price for which he would work. Asked once to celebrate in verse the triumph of mules in a race, he refused, alleging for ground, that to sing of "half-asses" would disgrace his lyre. The inducement was increased, and Simonides, bethinking himself now that mules, if they were offspring of asses, were also offspring of horses, accepted the task proposed and burst out with magnificent well-paid-for poetical enthusiasm, "Daughters of tempest-footed steeds!" Your point of view is a great matter in the art of putting things! One must not lightly think too ill of the poet-laureate that may be hired. Wordsworth did not scruple to ennoble this poet by describing him as "pure Simonides."

The fame of Simonides rests chiefly on his epigrams. 'Epigram,' as thus used, must be understood to mean a short piece, probably of verse, designed for an inscription. Miltiades is said to have erected a statue of the god Pan, in commemoration of this Arcadian divinity's supposed intervention on behalf of the Greeks against the Medo-Persians during the invasion under Darius. Mark the fitness, simplicity, density, fullness, with which the following epigram on the statue tells the whole story. The traits specified are very well reproduced in the translation:

> Me, goat-foot Pan, the Arcad—the Medes' fear,
> The Athenians' friend—Miltiades placed here.

The most celebrated, perhaps, of all the epigrams of Simonides is that on the Spartan Three Hundred who fell at

Thermopylæ. It is thus fitly and felicitously rendered by Mr. Bowles:

> Go tell the Spartans, thou that passest by,
> That here, obedient to their laws, we lie.

These epigrammatic poems are not what one would call brilliant. Their merit is their severe simplicity. They grow upon one in power, according as they grow in familiarity. This is exactly what should be the case with them. They would not else be suited to their purpose.

The Simonides of whom we have now been speaking is Simonides of Ceos. There was another poet having the same name, but of far inferior repute, Simonides of A-mor'gus.

With predecessors like Sappho and Simonides, Pindar must owe it as much to his fortune as to his merit, that he stands apart and alone in his superior fame. It is, perhaps, an instance of the survival less of the fittest, than of the most fortunate.

ALCÆUS AND SAPPHO.

X.

THEOCRITUS,

BION, MOSCHUS.

THEOCRITUS is the great name in Greek idyllic poetry. With Theocritus are associated, in a kind of parasitic renown, two other Greek pastoral poets, Bion, of country unknown—perhaps Smyrna—and Moschus, supposed of Syracuse. These two are chiefly celebrated as authors of elegies that not only are fine in themselves, but are noteworthy for being originals of elegiac odes in English not surpassed in beauty and power by any minor poems in the language. We refer to Milton's Lycidas and Shelley's Adonais. The latter poems are modeled, not at all in servile imitation, but simply in elegant reminiscence and allusion, upon Bion's Lament for Adonis, and Moschus's still more famous Lament for Bion.

THEOCRITUS.

The two disciples and followers of Theocritus—Bion and Moschus—are less simple, less natural, less genuine, as well as less vigorous, than their master. We begin by presenting them in a few specimen extracts out of the two poems just mentioned from their hands. We shall then feel released in mind and free to allot the larger space that we have planned to the earlier, the more original, the greater poet. Of Bion and Moschus, the men, we know literally nothing—unless as to Bion, Moschus's elegy on his friend be taken to afford a trace, faint indeed, of biographic information. Here are a few stanzas from Bion's elegy, entitled The Epitaph of Adonis. The translator is Mr. J. M. Chapman. Readers familiar with Shelley's Adonais will feel that Mr. Chapman

must have been powerfully influenced by poetic and artistic sympathy with that marvelously beautiful poem, when he executed, in the same stanza and in strongly resembling rhythm, this fine version of Bion's elegy:

I and the Loves Adonis dead deplore:
The beautiful Adonis is indeed
Departed, parted from us. Sleep no more
In purple, Cypris! but in watchet weed,
All-wretched! beat thy breast and all aread—
"Adonis is no more." The Loves and I
Lament him. O! her grief to see him bleed,
Smitten by white tooth on his whiter thigh,
Out-breathing life's faint sugh upon the mountain high!

. . . . . .

"Alas for Cypris!" sigh the Loves, "deprived
Of her fair spouse, she lost her beauty's pride;
Cypris was lovely whilst Adonis lived,
But with Adonis all her beauty died."
Mountains, and oaks, and streams, that broadly glide,
Or wail or weep for her; in tearful rills
For her gush fountains from the mountain side;
Redden the flowers from grief; city and hills
With ditties sadly wild, lorn Cytherea fills.

. . . . . .

Their curls are shorn: one breaks his bow; another
His arrows and the quiver; this unstrings,
And takes Adonis' sandal off; his brother
In golden urn the fountain water brings;
This bathes his thighs; that fans him with his wings.
The Loves, "Alas for Cypris!" weeping say:
Hymen hath quenched his torches; shreds and flings
The marriage wreath away; and for the lay
Of Love is only heard the doleful "weal-away."

Students of Milton will be reminded of that deliciously musical passage in the Paradise Lost allusive to the poetic legend and ritual of Adonis (Thammuz:)

Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured

The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties, all a summer's day;
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded.

We shall hear more, from Theocritus, of the theme of Adonis.

Now the lament for Bion by Moschus. The title is, The Epitaph of Bion, a Loving Herdsman. This also Mr. Chapman translates in the Spenserian stanza, but we prefer the excellent prose translation of Mr. Banks—if for no other reason, at least for this, that Mr. Banks gives us, as in verse Mr. Chapman could with difficulty have done, the frequently recurring refrain, "Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the lament," which is a strongly characteristic feature of the original poem. We begin with the beginning:

Plaintively groan at my bidding, ye woodland dells, and thou Dorian water, and weep, rivers, the lovely Bion; now wail at my bidding, ye plants, and now, groves, utter a wail; now may ye flowers breathe forth your life in sad clusters; blush now sorrowfully, ye roses, now, thou anemone; now, hyacinth, speak thy letters, and with thy leaves lisp 'ai,' 'ai,' more than is thy wont: a noble minstrel is dead.

Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the lament.

Ye nightingales, that wail in the thick foliage, tell the news to the Sicilian waters of Ar·e·thu'sa, that Bion the herdsman is dead, that with him both the song is dead, and perished is Doric minstrelsy.

Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the lament.

. . . . . .

Echo amid the rocks laments, because thou art mute, and mimics no more thy lips; and at thy death the trees have cast off their fruit, and the flowers have all withered; good milk hath not flowed from ewes; nor honey from hives; but it has perished in the wax wasted with grief; for no longer is it meet, now that thy honey is lost, to gather that.

. . . . . .

Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the lament.

All along with thee, O herdsman, have perished the Muses' gifts, charming kisses of maidens, lips of boys: and around thy tomb weep sad-visaged Loves. Venus loves thee far more than the kiss, with which lately she kissed dying Adonis. This is a second grief to thee, most

musical of rivers! This, O Me'les, is a fresh grief; to thy sorrow perished Homer aforetime, that sweet mouth of Cal-li'o-pe, and men say thou didst deplore thine illustrious son in streams of much weeping, and didst fill all the sea with thy voice: now again thou weepest another son, and pinest over a fresh woe. Both were beloved by the fountains; the one indeed was wont to drink of the Peg-a-se'an spring; the other, to enjoy a draught of the Arethusa. And the one sang the fair daughter of Tyn'da-rus, and the mighty son of Thetis, and Men-e-la'us, son of A'treus: but the other would sing not of wars, nor tears, but Pan; and would sound the praise of herdsmen, and feed the herd as he sang: and he was wont to fashion Pan's pipes, and to milk the sweet heifer, and to teach the lips of youths, and to cherish Eros in his bosom, and rouse a passion in Aphrodite.

. . . . . .

Begin, Sicilian Muses, begin the lament.

Alas, alas, when once in a garden the mallows have died, or the green parsley, or blooming crisp dill, they live again after, and spring up another year. But we, the great, and brave, or wise of men, after we have once died, unheard of in hollow earth, sleep a right long and boundless slumber, from which none are roused. . . .

Yet were I able, like Or'pheus, having gone down to Tar'ta-rus, like Ulysses once, or as Al-ci'des in days of yore, I too would haply descend to the home of Pluto, that I might see thee, and, if thou singest to Pluto, that I might hear what thou singest. Nay, but in the presence of the damsel (Pro-ser'pine) warble some Sicilian strain, sing some pleasant pastoral. She too, being Sicilian, sported on the Ætnæan shores, and knew the Doric song: nor will thy strain be unhonored; and as of old to Orpheus, sweetly singing to his lyre, she gave Eu-ryd'i-ce to return, so will she send thee, Bion, to thy hills. . . .

(For mythologic and other allusions, see Index.)

Of Theocritus personally we know almost as little as of Bion and Moschus. He is generally referred to Syracuse of Sicily, but we guess, with much confidence, that he must also have passed a part of his life in Alexandria. There is strong internal evidence that he knew something of Hebrew literature, that is, of the Bible. This would have been quite natural, since his time coincided with that of the making of the famous Septuagint Greek version of the Old Testament, executed at Alexandria under the auspices of Ptolemy

Philadelphus. There are suggestions of Scripture imagery and phrase in a number of the Theocritan idylls. The date of Theocritus's birth is placed between 284 and 280 B. C.

Virgil, we know, drew for his bucolic poems a large share of his material, as he did his method entire, from Theocritus. It is conjectured, with great probability, that Theocritus was himself largely indebted to preceding poets whose names and works have perished. Of undoubted absolute intellectual originality there is very little under the sun. We mortals stand in a line of succession, receiving and handing on. Well is it if once in a while one of us hands on some trifle more than he received.

As a specimen of Theocritus in his purely bucolic or pastoral vein, we select the first idyll. This is entitled The Death of Daphnis. It is a dialogue between two shepherds, including a song from one of them, drawn out by invitation of the other, to the memory of Daphnis, a herdsman that has died. The poem belongs in the same company with those which we have already given from Bion and Moschus. This is the original of which those are echoes. (The possible original, of which this also is an echo, has been lost.) The Lycidas of Milton, it will be seen, associates itself directly with the Death of Daphnis hardly less than with the lament for Adonis or the lament for Bion.

For our translator in this instance we elect Mr. Calverley. Mr. Calverley, a man of letters and leisure lately deceased in England, best known by his graceful 'verse of society' so-called, gave us a good metrical rendering of the idylls of Theocritus. We shall not, however, hold ourselves in our extracts exclusively to him, for the reason that of one piece by Theocritus which we should wish to show our readers, Mr. Matthew Arnold has made an exceptionally happy translation in prose. Here is Mr. Calverley's version of the Death of Daphnis. We omit, for brevity's sake, the conversation between the shepherds introductory to that song

itself on the death of Daphnis which gives its name to the idyll, and which really constitutes the substance of the poem. The lines of highly realistic conclusion, after the song, we give to show the poet's art in ending. The "sweet Maids" of the refrain are the Muses invoked for assistance to the singer. The death of Daphnis is a case of pining away under disappointment in love:

THYRSIS [*sings.*]

Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
The voice of Thyrsis. Ætna's Thyrsis I.
Where were ye, Nymphs, O where, while Daphnis pined?
In fair Penëus' or in Pindus' glens?
For great Anapus' stream was not your haunt,
Nor Ætna's cliff, nor Acis' sacred rill.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
O'er him the wolves, the jackals howled o'er him;
The lion in the oak-copse mourned his death.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
The kine and oxen stood around his feet,
The heifers and the calves wailed all for him.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
First from the mountain Hermes came, and said,
"Daphnis, who frets thee? Lad, whom lov'st thou so?"
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
Came herdsmen, shepherds came, and goatherds came;
All asked what ailed the lad. Priapus came
And said, "Why pine, poor Daphnis? while the maid
Foots it round every pool and every grove,
(*Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song,*)
"O lack-love and perverse, in quest of thee;
Herdsman in name, but goatherd rightlier called.
With eyes that yearn the goatherd marks his kids
Run riot, for he fain would frisk as they:
(*Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song:*)
"With eyes that yearn dost thou too mark the laugh
Of maidens, for thou may'st not share their glee."
Still naught the herdsman said · he drained alone
His bitter portion, till the fatal end.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.

Came Aphroditè, smiles on her sweet face,
False smiles, for heavy was her heart, and spake :
"So, Daphnis, thou must try a fall with Love!
But stalwart Love hath won the fall of thee."
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
Then "Ruthless Aphroditè," Daphnis said,
"Accursed Aphroditè, foe to man!
Say'st thou mine hour is come, my sun hath set?
Dead as alive, shall Daphnis work Love woe."
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Fly to Mount Ida, where the swain (men say)
And Aphroditè—to Anchises fly :
There are oak-forests ; here but galingale,
And bees that make a music round the hives.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Adonis owed his bloom to tending flocks
And smiting hares, and bringing wild beasts down.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Face once more Diomed : tell him 'I have slain
The herdsman Daphnis ; now I challenge thee.'
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Farewell, wolf, jackal, mountain-prisoned bear!
Ye'll see no more by grove or glade or glen
Your herdsman Daphnis! Arethuse, farewell,
And the bright streams that pour down Thymbris' side.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"I am that Daphnis, who lead here my kine,
Bring here to drink my oxen and my calves.
Begin, sweet Maids, begin the woodland song.
"Pan, Pan, O whether great Lyceum's crags
Thou haunt'st to-day, or mightier Mænalus,
Come to the Sicel isle! Abandon now
Rhium and Helicè, and the mountain-cairn
(That e'en gods cherish) of Lycaon's son!
Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.
"Come, king of song, o'er this my pipe, compact
With wax and honey-breathing, arch thy lip :
For surely I am torn from life by Love.
Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.
"From thicket now and thorn let violets spring,
Now let white lilies drape the juniper,

And pines grow figs, and nature all go wrong:
For Daphnis dies. Let deer pursue the hounds,
And mountain-owls outsing the nightingale.
Forget, sweet Maids, forget your woodland song.'

So spake he, and he never spake again.
Fain Aphroditè would have raised his head;
But all his thread was spun. So down the stream
Went Daphnis: closed the waters o'er a head
Dear to the Nine, of nymphs not unbeloved.
Now give me goat and cup; that I may milk
The one, and pour the other to the Muse.
Fare ye well, Muses, o'er and o'er farewell!
I'll sing strains lovelier yet in days to be.

GOATHERD.

Thyrsis, let honey and the honeycomb
Fill thy sweet mouth, and figs of Ægilus:
For ne'er cicala trilled so sweet a song.
Here is the cup: mark, friend, how sweet it smells:
The Hours, thou'lt say, have washed it in their well.
Hither, Cissætha! Thou, go milk her! Kids,
Be steady, or your pranks will rouse the ram.

Mr. E. C. Stedman, under the title, "Tennyson and Theocritus," has, in his "Victorian Poets," discussed charmingly the relation between the Englishman and the Greek, pointing out the debt of the former to the latter. In the course of doing this, Mr. Stedman has interspersed some exquisite fragments of original translation from Theocritus. We make room for a single specimen, a specimen chosen out of all because it serves for us a threefold purpose. First, it exhibits Mr. Stedman's deft and dainty hand in this work. Secondly, it suggests an interesting parallelism, noticed by Mr. Stedman himself, between Theocritus and two Victorian poets. Thirdly, it naturally leads us to that extract from Theocritus in Mr. Arnold's version, with which we must hasten to close this chapter. Here, then, are a few lines, in Mr. Stedman's translation, from the piece by Theocritus, commonly called

The Festival of Adonis—which, however, Mr. Stedman, not inaptly, as our readers, when the whole idyll is presented, will see, styles, The Syracusan Gossips:

> How fair to thee the gentle-footed Hours
> Have brought Adonis back from Acheron!
> Sweet hours, and slowest of the Blessed Ones:
> But still they come desired, and ever bring
> Gifts to all mortals.

With this compare the following three lines from Tennyson's Love and Duty:

> The slow sweet hours that bring us all things good,
> The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill,
> And all good things from evil.

Then, too, Mrs. Browning's allusion in perhaps the most perfect of her Sonnets from the Portuguese:

> I thought how once Theocritus had sung
> Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
> Who each one in a gracious hand appears
> To bear a gift for mortals, old or young.

The piece, The Festival of Adonis, now to follow and to finish our presentation of Theocritus, is not a pastoral poem. On the contrary, it is pronouncedly a poem of the city. But it is eminently fit to be called an idyll, that is, a little picture. For a little picture it is—a picture true and vivid, as if painted by the sunbeam, as if, that is to say, a photograph—of a day's life, the life of a religious holiday, lived by two women of the common class, in the great Greek city of Alexandria, in the time of Theocritus. We may forget the religious dilettanteism inseparably associated with the purpose for which the poem is introduced and with the spirit in which it is treated by Mr. Arnold in his essay—we may forget this, to admire and enjoy with heart the vivacity and the grace with which the translation is executed. Here is the poem, but we give first the prefatory explanation supplied by Mr. Arnold:

"The idyll is dramatic. Somewhere about two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era, a couple of Syracusan women, staying at Alexandria, agreed, on the occasion of a great religious solemnity—the feast of Adonis—to go together to the palace of King Ptolemy Philadelphus, to see the image of Adonis, which the Queen Ar-sin'o-e, Ptolemy's wife, had had decorated with peculiar magnificence. A hymn, by a celebrated performer, was to be recited over the image. The names of the two women are Gorgo and Prax-in'o-e; their maids, who are mentioned in the poem, are called Eu'no-e and Eu'ty-chis. Gorgo comes, by appointment, to Praxinoe's house to fetch her, and there the dialogue begins:"

Gorgo. Is Praxinoe at home?

Praxinoe. My dear Gorgo, at last! Yes, here I am. Eunoe, find a chair,—get a cushion for it.

G. It will do beautifully as it is.

P. Do sit down.

G. O, this gadabout spirit! I could hardly get to you, Praxinoe, through all the crowd and all the carriages. Nothing but heavy boots, nothing but men in uniform. And what a journey it is! My dear child, you really live *too* far off.

P. It is all that insane husband of mine. He has chosen to come out here to the end of the world, and take a hole of a place,—for a house it is not,—on purpose that you and I might not be neighbors. He is always just the same;—any thing to quarrel with one! any thing for spite!

G. My dear, don't talk so of your husband before the little fellow. Just see how astonished he looks at you. Never mind, Zo-pyr'i-o, my pet, she is not talking about papa.

P. Good heavens! the child does really understand.

G. Pretty papa!

P. That pretty papa of his the other day (though I told him beforehand to mind what he was about), when I sent him to a shop to buy soap and rouge brought me home salt instead;—stupid, great, big, interminable animal!

G. Mine is just the fellow to him. . . . But never mind now, get on your things and let us be off to the palace to see the Adonis. I hear the queen's decorations are something splendid.

P. In grand people's houses every thing is grand. What things you have seen in Alexandria! What a deal you will have to tell to any body who has never been here!

G. Come, we ought to be going.

P. Every day is holiday to people who have nothing to do. Eunoe, pick up your work; and take care, lazy girl, how you leave it lying about again; the cats find it just the bed they like. Come, stir yourself, fetch me some water, quick! I wanted the water first, and the girl brings me the soap. Never mind; give it me. Not all that, extravagant! Now pour out the water:—stupid! why don't you take care of my dress? That will do. I have got my hands washed as it pleased God. Where is the key of the large wardrobe? Bring it here;—quick!

G. Praxinoe, you can't think how well that dress, made full, as you've got it, suits you. Tell me, how much did it cost?—the dress by itself, I mean.

P. Don't talk of it, Gorgo: more than eight guineas of good hard money. And about the work on it I have almost worn my life out.

G. Well, you couldn't have done better.

P. Thank you. Bring me my shawl, and put my hat properly on my head;—properly. No, child (*to her little boy*), I am not going to take you; there's a bogy on horseback, who bites. Cry as much as you like; I'm not going to have you lamed for life. Now we'll start. Nurse, take the little one and amuse him; call the dog in, and shut the street-door. (*They go out.*) Good heavens! what a crowd of people! How on earth are we ever to get through all this? They are like ants: you can't count them. My dearest Gorgo, what will become of us? here are the royal Horse Guards. My good man, don't ride over me! Look at that bay horse rearing bolt upright; what a vicious one! Eunoe, you mad girl, do take care!—that horse will certainly be the death of the man on his back. How glad I am now that I left the child safe at home!

G. All right, Praxinoe, we are safe behind them; and they have gone on to where they are stationed.

P. Well, yes, I begin to revive again. From the time I was a little girl I have had more horror of horses and snakes than of any thing in the world. Let us get on; here's a great crowd coming this way upon us.

G. (*to an old woman*), Mother, are you from the palace?

Old Woman. Yes, my dears.

G. Has one a tolerable chance of getting there?

O. W. My pretty young lady, the Greeks got to Troy by dint of trying hard; trying will do any thing in this world.

G. The old creature has delivered herself of an oracle and departed.

P. Women can tell you every thing about every thing, Jupiter's marriage with Juno not excepted.

G. Look, Praxinoe, what a squeeze at the palace-gates!

P. Tremendous! Take hold of me, Gorgo, and you, Eunoe, take hold of Eutychis!—tight hold, or you'll be lost. Here we go in all together. Hold tight to us, Eunoe. O dear! O dear! Gorgo, there's my scarf torn right in two. For heaven's sake, my good man, as you hope to be saved, take care of my dress!

Stranger. I'll do what I can, but it doesn't depend upon me.

P. What heaps of people! They push like a drove of pigs.

Str. Don't be frightened, ma'am, we are all right.

P. May you be all right, my dear sir, to the last day you live, for the care you have taken of us! What a kind, considerate man! There is Eunoe jammed in a squeeze. Push, you goose, push! Capital! We are all of us the right side of the door, as the bridegroom said when he had locked himself in with the bride.

G. Praxinoe, come this way. Do but look at that work, how delicate it is! how exquisite! Why, they might wear it in heaven.

P. Heavenly patroness of needlewomen, what hands were hired to do that work? Who designed those beautiful patterns? They seem to stand up and move about, as if they were real;—as if they were living things, and not needlework. Well, man is a wonderful creature! And look, look, how charming he lies there on his silver couch, with just a soft down on his cheeks, that beloved Adonis,—Adonis, whom one loves even though he is dead!

Another Stranger. You wretched woman, do stop your incessant chatter! Like turtles, you go on forever. They are enough to kill one with their broad lingo,—nothing but *a*, *a*, *a*.

G. Lord, where does the man come from? What is it to you if we *are* chatter-boxes? Order about your own servants! Do you give orders to Syracusan women? If you want to know, we came originally from Corinth, as Bellerophon did; we speak Peloponnesian. I suppose Dorian women may be allowed to have a Dorian accent.

P. O, honey-sweet Proserpine, let us have no more masters than the one we've got! We don't the least care for *you;* pray don't trouble yourself for nothing.

G. Be quiet, Praxinoe! That first-rate singer, the Argive woman's daughter, is going to sing the *Adonis* hymn. She is the same who was chosen to sing the dirge last year. We are sure to have something first-rate from *her.* She is going through her airs and graces ready to begin.

Mr. Arnold interrupts with admirable admiring comment, as follows:

"So far the dialogue; and, as it stands in the original, it can hardly be praised too highly. It is a page torn fresh out of the book of human life. What freedom! What animation! What gayety! What naturalness! It is said that Theocritus, in composing this poem, borrowed from a work of Sophron, a poet of an earlier and better time; but, even if this is so, the form is still Theocritus's own, and how excellent is that form, how masterly! And this in a Greek poem of the decadence; for Theocritus's poetry, after all, is poetry of the decadence. When such is Greek poetry of the decadence, what must be Greek poetry of the prime?

"Then the singer begins her hymn:"——

Mistress, who lovest the haunt of Golgi, and Idalium, and high-peaked E'ryx, Aphroditè that playest with gold! how have the delicate-footed Hours, after twelve months, brought thy Adonis back to thee from the ever-flowing Ach'e-ron! Tardiest of the immortals are the boon Hours, but all mankind wait their approach with longing, for they ever bring something with them. O Cypris, Di-o'ne's child! thou didst change—so is the story among men—Ber-e-ni'ce from mortal to immortal, by dropping ambrosia into her fair bosom; and in gratitude to thee for this, O thou of many names and many temples, Bereni'ce's daughter, Arsinoe, lovely Helen's living counterpart, makes much of Adonis with all manner of braveries.

All fruits that the tree bears are laid before him, all treasures of the garden in silver baskets, and alabaster boxes, gold-inlaid, of Syrian unguent; and all confectionary that cunning women make on their kneading-tray, kneading up every sort of flowers with white meal, and all that they make of sweet honey and delicate oil, and all winged and creeping things are here set before him. And there are built for him green bowers with wealth of tender anise, and little boy-loves flutter about over them, like young nightingales trying their new wings on the tree, from bough to bough. O the ebony, the gold, the eagle of white ivory that bears aloft his cup-bearer to Kronos-born Zeus! And up there, see! a second couch strewn for lovely Adonis, scarlet coverlids softer than sleep itself (so Mi-le'tus and the Samian wool-grower will say); Cypris has hers, and the rosy-armed Adonis has his, that eighteen or nineteen-year-

old bridegroom. His kisses will not wound, the hair on his lip is yet light.

Now, Cypris, good-night, we leave thee with thy bridegroom; but to-morrow morning, with the earliest dew, we will one and all bear him forth to where the waves splash upon the sea-strand, and letting loose our locks, and letting fall our robes, with bosoms bare, we will set up this, our melodious strain:—

Beloved Adonis, alone of the demigods (so men say) thou art permitted to visit both us and Acheron! This lot had neither Agamemnon, nor the mighty moon-struck hero, Ajax, nor Hector, the first-born of Hec'u-ba's twenty children, nor Pa-tro'clus, nor Pyrrhus, who came home from Troy, nor those yet earlier Lap'i-thæ and the sons of Deu-ca'li-on, nor the Pelasgians, the root of Argos and of Pelops' isle. Be gracious to us now, loved Adonis, and be favorable to us for the year to come! Dear to us hast thou been at this coming, dear to us shalt thou be when thou comest again.

We are duly let down with these last words from Gorgo:

Praxinoe, certainly women are wonderful things. That lucky woman to know all that! and luckier still to have such a splendid voice! And now we must see about getting home. My husband has not had his dinner. That man is all vinegar, and nothing else; and if you keep him waiting for his dinner he's dangerous to go near. Adieu, precious Adonis, and may you find us all well when you come next year!

The light-hearted, innocent-seeming play of spirits in a dialogue like the foregoing need deceive no reader. Sweet purity did not underlie Greek life; nor was there high moral tone in the man to keep free the genius of Theocritus from faults of indecency in his verse. The English translator who would make from Theocritus a book suitable for the drawing-room must at points expurgate and veil his original with care. To have altogether the Greek's taste one would need have also the Greek's religion. The Greek's religion we have done well to throw wholly away. We have, perhaps, not yet, either in letters or in art, thrown away quite as much as we should of the Greek's taste. Indeed, in the sphere of æsthetics we have still not a little both to learn and to unlearn from the Greek.

ELOQUENCE.

XI.

DEMOSTHENES,

ÆSCHINES.

We have several times before applied a convenient formula of expression, which we may now again with propriety resume and adapt. We may say that not more certainly is Homer first in fame among epic poets, Pindar among poets of the lyre, than among masters of eloquence is Demosthenes. With Demosthenes—set by that orator's side in foil and contrast, somewhat as with Cicero was Hortensius, as with Webster, Hayne—was associated Æschines. Very evenly matched in oratoric excellence seem the two great orations, pitted against each other still, in their now silent but never-to-be-pacified contention and rivalry—the two acknowledged masterpieces, we mean, respectively of Æschines and of Demosthenes. It is even easy to imagine the chance that should have inverted their actual relative rank in fame. Had but Æschines happened to get the majority of votes instead of Demosthenes, how know we that the literature of subsequent appreciation and criticism would not, with apparent success, have exerted itself to show good reason why such an issue of the trial was according to the respective merits of the men and the orators? It is the commander who wins the battle, it is the orator who carries the day—in short, it is success,

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rather than desert of success—that men in general have the habit of crowning.

But we agree that Demosthenes was in truth the greater orator. To clinch the conclusion, there is that fine story of Æschines which every body knows. Æschines, failing to receive in his suit one fifth part of the votes, felt obliged to leave Athens. He took up at Rhodes the occupation of a teacher of oratory. He there read to his pupils the oration against himself of his rival and conqueror. When his pupils applauded, Æschines exclaimed, "But you should have heard the rascal deliver it himself!" The generosity of this trait in Æschines wins on us irresistibly in behalf of the man that displayed it.

Still Æschines does show at disadvantage in contrast with Demosthenes. There is in Demosthenes more moral height, more genuineness—certainly not more artifice, but more art; for Demosthenes was an orator by art. Stormy we called him, and stormy he was, but he stormed by rule and not by caprice. His passion was deep enough and strong enough and earnest enough to submit to be regulated. It was not heady. It did not indulge itself. It obeyed necessary law —it served its chosen end.

The art of Demosthenes was twofold. It respected his composition as well as his delivery. The stories are well known of the natural difficulties with which Demosthenes contended in becoming an orator. His articulation was bad. To remedy this defect he trained his vocal organs by declaiming with pebbles in his mouth. He was easily thrown off his balance by interruptions of noise. Against this weakness he fortified himself by declaiming on the shore to the waves of the far-resounding sea. The noise of these waves should be to him as the tumult of the people in their assemblies. He practiced before a mirror, with a sword hung over the shoulder to correct a habit he had of shrugging that member ungracefully. An actor recited back to him

a passage of Euripides that he had himself just recited, and in doing so improved upon his own manner to such a degree that the young orator went at the business of learning how to speak as if he had it all still to learn. Action, action, action—that is, delivery, delivery, delivery—was the beginning, the middle, and the end of oratory with Demosthenes.

But Demosthenes studied style in composition no less than he studied style in elocution. Of Ignatius Loyola it was said that he prayed as if every thing depended upon God, and then got up and worked as if every thing depended upon himself. So it might be said of Demosthenes, that he cultivated art in writing as if the chief thing in oratory was to write, and then cultivated art in speaking, as if the chief thing in oratory was to speak. He copied the history of Thucydides eight times throughout, to acquire that historian's mastery of dense and weighty expression. He shaved one side of his head and hid himself in a cave to work there until his hair should grow again. His enemies charged that his speeches smelled of oil. It was the oil of the midnight lamp, lighting his studies, that they meant.

These stories about the studious habits of Demosthenes are probably authentic. But they might be mythical in part, and yet the just effect of them remain unimpaired. It cannot be doubted that the man of whom such stories became current was in truth very much the sort of man that these stories represent Demosthenes to have been. The greatest orator in the world forms a nearly ideal example of what self-culture can do against serious obstacles from nature. Demosthenes was no doubt a man of magnificent mental gifts, but no less was he a man of magnificent will.

As if to make the example thus supplied in Demosthenes complete by contrast, it happened that against Demosthenes was matched in rivalry a man in whom every natural qualification of the orator existed and was carried to its height.

Æschines was born an orator. He had a voice like the voice of a herald. Grace and majesty modulated his gesture. Words came to him like affectionate lieges trooping to a king. Yet the orator made outdid the orator born. Demosthenes was greater than Æschines.

ÆSCHINES.

It is no mere traditionary and conventional opinion, the opinion that Demosthenes was the greatest of orators. It might indeed with excellent reason be argued in prediction that never in the future history of mankind will there appear another orator quite equal to him. At any rate, that ever again there will exist in the world a state of things altogether so adapted to breed orators of the highest rank, as was the state of things in which Demosthenes flourished, may be set down for one of the most improbable of prophetic conjectures.

In the first place, the Greek temperament—the Ionic temperament at least—was of all temperaments the temperament for oratory. In the second place, the Greek language was of all languages the language for oratory. In the third place, the Greek climate was surpassingly favorable to clear voice and bright animal spirits. In the fourth place, the Greek habits of life were, in some peculiar respects, highly conducive to vigor of physical health. In the fifth place, Athens was a pure democracy. In the sixth place, the Athenian assembly of voters was numerous enough to make a suitably exciting audience. In the seventh place, that assembly was not numerous enough to make an audience too large for a good speaker to command with his voice. In the eighth place, the intelligence of the people, naturally quick, was trained to an alertness probably never elsewhere equaled among average men. In the ninth place, the Athenians' appetite for eloquence was keen beyond any parallel

in history. In the tenth place, their fondness for news and for new ideas was proverbial. In the eleventh place, the popular assembly of Athens was the instinctive resort of the citizens for the gratification of these tastes. In the twelfth place, there was no newspaper press to divide with the bema the attention of the popular mind. In the thirteenth place, Athenian politics were always enterprising and meddlesome enough to supply rousing topics of debate. In the fourteenth place, the prizes of eloquence, in the form of power and of fame, were more imminent and more dazzling at Athens than ever they were anywhere else in the world. In the fifteenth place, the resulting competition among orators was incessant and incomparably eager. In the sixteenth place, the personal element—as was natural in a municipality like that of Athens where the citizens all might know one another—entered to add the necessary last ingredient of highest stimulation for the powers and passions of orators.

Such a concurrence of conditions productive of eloquence is little likely ever to be renewed under the sun. In saying, therefore, that Demosthenes was the summit of Athenian eloquence, we, at the same time, say that he was the summit of the eloquence of mankind.

But after commendation so high, bestowed on Demosthenes, we experience a reaction of embarrassment. We shall not be able to present any specimen extracts from his orations that will seem to justify our praise. Almost certainly our readers will feel that, this once at least, their author is carried fairly off his feet by a "third wave" of enthusiasm for his favorite classics. Such is not the fact. But there is sufficient reason why any exemplification whatever must fail of triumphantly exhibiting Demosthenes as the prince of orators that he was. The living action, action, action, of the orator himself will be wanting. The eager original audience, which was half, or more than half, of the oratory, will be—visionary and silent! The occasion will have perished. The details

of history, the circumstances, the local and personal objects of swift passing allusion from the orator—these are gone now, many of them quite irrecoverably gone, and all of them gone so as to be recoverable only through much special study. And then, besides, however good the translation, translation it must be, wherein Demosthenes here is shown, not the original speech with its infinitely labored and infinitely exquisite style. Perhaps, too, we ought to make it a point as important as any in the reason why our exemplification of this orator must inevitably disappoint our readers, that the very idea of eloquence was different with Demosthenes from what the idea of eloquence is but too likely to be in the popular mind of to-day. Eloquence with Demosthenes was an art of getting his hearers' votes, not an art of getting his hearers' praise. You must not look for passages of "fine writing" in the speeches of Demosthenes. His speeches are practical, not poetical. There are no ambitious rhetorical climaxes in them which the audience could, by a round of applause, pay the orator for his trouble in building. You would as soon think of an American jury's applauding the lawyer that was addressing them, as think of the Athenian assembly's applauding Demosthenes. The indignant orator would tell them, Spare your cheers while I am speaking, and give me your votes when I have done. We need not say that we consider the Demosthenic conception of eloquence the true.

The speeches that remain of Demosthenes are of two sorts —private and public, or judicial and political; for Demosthenes was a lawyer as well as a statesman. As lawyer he wrote for clients engaged in litigation speeches which those clients were supposed to deliver for themselves before the court. These speeches he sought to make suit the condition, the circumstances, the character, of the men who were to use them. It would not be wise for us here to reproduce any of the private orations of Demosthenes. Of Demosthenes's public orations, those against Philip of Macedon—existing in

two series, one called Olynthiacs and another Philippics—and in addition to these, the Oration on the Crown, so-called, are the most celebrated. The oration last mentioned is, at least by popular fame, the masterpiece of Demosthenes. Our readers would naturally be ill-contented not to have some representative extracts from this. First, however, we propose to let them see an extract—a full half of the whole short harangue it shall be—from what Mr. Grote pronounces "one of the most splendid harangues ever uttered," namely, the third Olynthiac oration of Demosthenes.

This oration is so styled from its being about Olynthus, a city threatened by Philip, and seeking from the Athenians succor against him—succor that Demosthenes was anxious the Athenians should send. Philip was by this time well launched on his conquering career. Demosthenes, in all his efforts against the Macedonian monarch, sought nobly, but vainly, to reanimate the supine and abject spirit of his countrymen. He was of an age too late. The glorious age for Athens was irrevocably past. It is as much pathetic as it is inspiring, to watch Demosthenes vicariously struggling, and left to struggle alone, for his country against his country's inevitable fate. He spoke to the deaf; but if the deaf could hear, the Athenians would have heard Demosthenes. We begin at a point nearly midway of the oration:

> Is there not a man among you, Athenians, who reflects by what steps Philip, from a beginning so inconsiderable, has mounted to this height of power? First, he took Am-phip'o-lis; then he became master of Pydna; then Pot-i-dæ'a fell; then Me-tho'ne; then came his inroad into Thessaly; after this, having disposed affairs at Phe'ræ, at Pag'a-sæ, at Magnesia, entirely as he pleased, he marched into Thrace. Here, while engaged in expelling some and establishing other princes, he fell sick. Again recovering, he never turned a moment from his course to ease and indulgence, but instantly attacked the Olynthians. His expeditions against the Illyrians, the Pæonians, against A-rym'bas, I pass all over. But I may be asked, Why this recital now? That you may know and see your own error, in ever neglecting some part of your affairs, as if beneath

your regard, and that active spirit with which Philip pursues his designs; which ever fires him, and which never can permit him to rest satisfied with those things he has already accomplished. If, then, he determines firmly and invariably to pursue his conquests, and if we are obstinately resolved against every vigorous and effectual measure, think what consequences may we expect. In the name of Heaven, can any man be so weak, as not to know, that by neglecting this war, we are transferring it from that country to our own? And should this happen, I fear, Athenians! that as they who inconsiderately borrow money upon high interest, after a short-lived affluence are deprived of their own fortunes; so we, by this continued indolence, by consulting only our ease and pleasure, may be reduced to the grievous necessity of engaging in affairs the most shocking and disagreeable, and of exposing ourselves in the defense of this our native territory.

To censure some one may tell me is easy, and in the power of every man, but the true counselor should point out that conduct which the present exigence demands. Sensible as I am, Athenians, that when your expectations have in any instance been disappointed, your resentment frequently falls not on those who merit it, but on him who has spoken last; yet I cannot, from a regard to my own safety, suppress what I deem of moment to lay before you. I say, then, this occasion calls for a twofold armament. First, we are to defend the cities of the Olynthians, and for this purpose to detach a body of forces; in the next place, in order to infest his kingdom, we are to send out our navy manned with other levies. If you neglect either of these, I fear your expedition will be fruitless. For if you content yourselves with infesting his dominions, this he will endure, until he is master of Olynthus; and then he can, with ease, repel the invasion; or, if you only send succors to the Olynthians, where he sees his own kingdom free from danger, he will apply with constancy and vigilance to the war, and at length weary out the besieged to a submission. Your levies, therefore, must be considerable enough to serve both purposes. These are my sentiments with respect to our armament.

The spirit of practical statesmanship in which this young man—Demosthenes was a little more than thirty years of age—felt it incumbent upon him to exercise his eloquence, is well exhibited in this speech. Having pointed out the military provision deemed by him necessary, he next proceeds to discuss the important question of raising the required

money. Money enough lay idle in the public treasury, but that money was appropriated beforehand to purveying theatrical amusement for the populace. And there was a law forbidding, under penalty, any one to move a diversion of that fund to other use. This will be enough to explain the gingerly handling of so delicate a topic exemplified in the following passage, continuing the speech of Demosthenes from the point at which it was interrupted above :

And now as to the expense of these preparations. You are already provided for the payment of your forces better than any other people. This provision is distributed among yourselves in the manner most agreeable, but if you restore it to the army, the supplies will be complete without any addition, if not, an addition will be necessary, or the whole, rather, will remain to be raised. How then, I may be asked, do you move for a decree to apply those funds to the military service? By no means! it is my opinion, indeed, that an army must be raised, that this money really belongs to the army, and that the same regulation which entitles our citizens to receive, should oblige them also to act. At present, you expend the sums on entertainments, without regard to your affairs. It remains, then, that a general contribution be raised; a great one, if a great one be required; a small one, if such may be sufficient. Money must be found. Without it nothing can be effected. Various schemes are proposed by various persons. Do you make that choice which you think most advantageous, and while you have an opportunity, exert yourselves in the care of your interests.

It is worthy your attention to consider how the affairs of Philip are at this time circumstanced. For they are by no means so well disposed, so very flourishing, as an inattentive observer would pronounce. Nor would he have engaged in this war at all, had he thought he should have been obliged to maintain it. He hoped that the moment he appeared, all things would fall before him. But these hopes are vain. And this disappointment, in the first place, troubles and dispirits him. Then the Thessalians alarm him, a people remarkable for their perfidy on all occasions, and to all persons. And just as they have ever proved, even so he finds them now. For they have resolved in council to demand the restitution of Pagasæ, and have opposed his attempt to fortify Magnesia; and I am informed that for the future he is to be excluded from their ports and markets, as these conveniences belong to the states of Thessaly, and are not to be intercepted by Philip. And should he

be deprived of such a fund of wealth, he must be greatly straitened to support his foreign troops. Besides this, we must suppose that the Pæonians and the Illyrians, and all the others, would prefer freedom and independence to a state of slavery. They are not accustomed to subjection, and the insolence of this man, it is said, knows no bounds; nor is this improbable, for great and unexpected success is apt to hurry weak minds into extravagances. Hence it often proves much more difficult to maintain acquisitions than to acquire. It is your part, therefore, to regard the time of his distress as your most favorable opportunity. Improve it to the utmost, send out your embassies, take the field yourselves, and excite a general ardor abroad, ever considering how readily Philip would attack us, if he were favored by any incident like this, if a war had broken out on our borders. And would it not be shameful to want the resolution to bring that distress on him, which, had it been equally in his power, he certainly would have made you feel.

This, too, demands your attention, Athenians! that you are now to determine whether it be most expedient to carry the war into his country, or to fight him here. If Olynthus be defended, Macedon will be the seat of war, you may harass his kingdom, and enjoy your own territories free from apprehensions. But should that nation be subdued by Philip, who will oppose his marching hither? Will the Thebans? Let it not be thought severe, when I affirm that they will join readily in the invasion. Will the Phocians? a people scarcely able to defend their own country, without your assistance. Will any others? But, sir, cries some one, he would make no such attempt. This would be the greatest of absurdities, not to execute those threats, when he has full power, which, now when they appear so idle and extravagant, he yet dares to utter. And I think you are not yet to learn how great would be the difference between our engaging him here, and there. Were we to be only thirty days abroad, and to draw all the necessaries of the camp from our own lands, even were there no enemy to ravage them, the damage would, in my opinion, amount to more than the whole expense of the late war. Add then the presence of an enemy, and how greatly must the calamity be increased? but, farther, add the infamy, and to those who judge rightly, no distress can be more grievous than the scandal of misconduct.

It is incumbent, therefore, upon us all, justly influenced by these considerations, to unite vigorously in the common cause, and repel the danger that threatens this territory. Let the rich exert themselves on this occasion; that, by contributing a small portion of their affluence, they may secure the peaceful possession of the rest. Let those who are of the age for mili-

tary duty; that by learning the art of war in Philip's dominions, they may become formidable defenders of their native land. Let our orators; that they may safely submit their conduct to the public inspection; for your judgment of their administrations will ever be determined by the event of things. And may we all contribute to render that favorable!

We have used Mr. Leland's translation, and in doing so have ventured to make him say "has" instead of "hath," introducing also a few other like changes of verbal form—to remove a certain archaic quaintness which we thought better dispensed with. (We shall presently take a similar liberty with Mr. Kennedy's translation of the Oration on the Crown.) Mr. Leland translates very well, but, alas! what rendering in English could possibly do justice to the incomparable original? Every sentence in Demosthenes lives as if it were animated with an independent life of its own. The balance of member against member, the epigrammatic point, the condensation—as of liquid made solid under pressure—the nerve, the vigor, the movement, the inimitable art of arrangement, the carefully happy choice of words, the rhythm, the harmony, the growth, the culmination, the close—like the blow perhaps of a mace, or like the breaking of a breaker rolling in on the beach—all this is of Demosthenes, and Demosthenes is lost when you lose it, as lose it you must, in translation.

"Philippic" is a word in common English use to denote a piece of violent invective. Emphatically such was indeed the spirit of Cicero's speeches against Antony called, in imitation of the Greek, Philippics. The different character of the Philippics of Demosthenes is very well seen in the foregoing specimen. There is in some of them more energy of personal abuse directed against Philip. But mere brute denunciation is by no means the staple of these remarkable speeches of Demosthenes. The one note on which all of them alike are keyed is, March against Philip! As to the particular measure of support, in this crisis, for Olynthus,

Demosthenes was but moderately successful in persuading his countrymen. A few mercenary troops first were sent to the aid of the distressed city, and then at last—too late—a body of Athenian soldiers. Olynthus was destroyed, and there was no breakwater left between the rising Macedonian tide of conquest and Athens. Demosthenes still fought Philip, might and main. But that rising tide was too strong for him. It was helped by the stars in their courses. It swept over Athens, and Athens was free and great no more.

Some ancients and some moderns have thought that Demosthenes's hostility to Philip—in other words, his whole political career—however noble abstractly, was practically a mistake, an anachronism. The great Greek orator, or rather great Greek oration-writer, I-soc'ra-tes, was disposed to favor Philip's taking the headship of Greece. He, it is said, died at ninety-nine, of grief over the news of the battle of Chæ-ro-nei'a. This explains the allusion in that sonnet of Milton's:

> as that dishonest victory
> At Chæronea fatal to liberty
> Killed with report that old man eloquent.

Po-lyb'i-us, the Greek historian, disapproved the statesmanship of Demosthenes. So in modern times did, for example, the French Victor Cousin. Some (Cousin, for one) even go so far as to question the high and pure patriotism of the orator, conceiving that Æschines and Demosthenes are pretty much on one moral level, and that a level not greatly above the common low level of the Athens of their times. These last find personal self-seeking, not love of country, to have been the chief motive with Demosthenes and with Æschines alike. According to their view, the mutual strife of the two Greeks was for popular favor, to be won through oratory. Let us refuse to believe it. Let us hold to our ideal Demosthenes. Let us feel it to have been admirable in him, and a thing not altogether in vain, that he grappled so

fiercely with Philip in a struggle which was certain to bring, not the king, but the orator, at length to the ground. The future was undoubtedly Philip's, and after Philip, his son Alexander's, and after Alexander, in due time the Romans'. But meanwhile, who would not have the old order, the Greece of ancient days, at least lift up its protest against perishing, and, if perish it must, perish in a manner worthy of Marathon, of Thermopylæ, of Salamis? And not Pericles himself could have asked to see his country expire more nobly than in Demosthenes the orator she expired.

We advance now to the presentation of Demosthenes's Oration on the Crown.

This oration takes its name from its object. Its object was the vindicating for himself by Demosthenes of his just title by merit to receive a civic crown, proposed for him, from the hands of his Athenian fellow-citizens. The proposal was made in a decree moved by the orator's friend, Ctesiphon (Tess'). Æschines stood forward and opposed the measure. But he did not attack Demosthenes directly. He indicted Ctesiphon for offering an illegal decree. The decree for crowning Demosthenes was, so Æschines charged, illegal in several respects. For one thing, the laws forbade crowning a public official that was still responsible to the state for submitting accounts of government money expended by him. For a second thing, there was an enactment against crowning any one, as it was now proposed to crown Demosthenes, in the theatre at the exhibition of the new tragedies. For a third thing, and this in reality the chief thing of all, it was unlawful to make false allegations in a decree proposed—as in the present case was done by Ctesiphon, in declaring Demosthenes a citizen worthy of a crown.

This opposition of Æschines was opposition, in a sense, after the fact. For the decree of Ctesiphon had been approved by the Council of Five Hundred, and then formally ratified and passed by the Assembly. It was a law. But

before the law was carried into effect, that is, before Demosthenes was actually crowned, Æschines intervened with his indictment against Ctesiphon. This postponed the honoring of Demosthenes; for, pending the decision on the indictment, the ceremony of coronation must wait. And the Dionysiac festival was already too close at hand for a decision to be had before that occasion arrived.

The indictment against Ctesiphon, having served its first purpose in keeping the olive chaplet interwoven with gold from the brow of Demosthenes, was permitted by its author to sleep seven or eight years. Events, by the end of that time, were probably judged to have created a conjuncture favorable to the final crushing of Demosthenes. Victorious Philip had fallen by the hand of an assassin, and Alexander, succeeding prematurely to the throne, had disappointed the hopes and falsified the predictions of Demosthenes by exhibiting himself far more formidable than even his father. He had erased Thebes from the face of the earth—with a fine magnanimity, fated to be famous, ostentatiously leaving the poet Pindar's house untouched amid the general ruin. Athens fell abject at the feet of the young Macedonian conqueror, who demanded from her the surrender to himself of her chief orators, Demosthenes of course included. Alexander was persuaded out of this extreme severity—placable perhaps because larger affairs claimed his attention. He swept resistlessly into Asia, and established himself upon the throne of Darius. The Lacedæmonian king, Agis, made a rally against him in his absence, but was overwhelmed and slain. Greece prostrate thus under Alexander's heel, now was the hour and power of Æschines. He renewed the prosecution of Ctesiphon, and the duel of Æschines with Demosthenes was finally and fatally joined.

Fatally—but not after all for Demosthenes. It enhances inconceivably the marvel and the magnificence of Demosthenes's triumph, that he should have triumphed handicapped

as he was, and against such frightful odds of adverse circumstance. For not only against odds of adverse circumstance, but heavily handicapped by his own past, Demosthenes went into this oratoric struggle for life or death with Æschines. Demosthenes had said foolish things, and done weak things, that could not be forgotten. He had denounced Philip as a drunken barbarian brute, and Philip had taken a princely revenge on the orator. He had behaved himself toward Athens in defeat with signal magnanimity. He had carefully sent back to the humiliated city her dead, and her soldiers made prisoners he had released without ransom. Demosthenes had publicly called Alexander a boy and a madcap, and Demosthenes's madcap boy had straightway proceeded to put the world under his feet.

But Demosthenes's weakness in conduct was worse than his folly in speech. The brave orator had, so it was reported, proved a pusillanimous soldier. Demosthenes had intrepidly shaken his fist at Macedon from the bema, but he fled from his post like a coward in battle. The patriot, too, that had so loftily spurned Macedonian gold—in the Assembly—had let Persian gold stick to his palm—in the closet. It probably was not a bribe accepted, but it undeniably was foreign money received. It gave Demosthenes's enemies a chance. History, alas! leaves us few flawless ideals in human character for our worship. Indeed, One only could say, Which of you convinceth me of sin? But there is in this case a certain unsatisfying compensation. What is deducted from Demosthenes the man is added to Demosthenes the orator. It was against all this disadvantage that Demosthenes was overwhelmingly adjudged to deserve his crown. What a master of men by speech was this last of the Athenians! But something of a manager, something of a politician, Demosthenes must also have been. The confident tone of his speech in self-vindication implies, we think, consciousness, on his part, of strong partisan support in the audience.

It will be more satisfactory to let our readers prepare themselves for appreciating Demosthenes's defense, by first learning something of Æschines's attack. The legal argument we shall omit from both speeches. Æschines, technically, had much the better of Demosthenes. The law was clear for the conviction of Ctesiphon. Nothing could have been more luminous or more cogent in reasoning than Æschines's presentation of the legal points in the case. Æschines sought to make Demosthenes in replying follow his own order in treatment of the topics discussed. The attempt was wise in Æschines, but for Demosthenes to do so would have been fatal. Demosthenes really had little to say in refutation of Æschines on the points of law involved. He did the only thing open to him that gave any promise of success. He made his hearers forget the law, by engaging them at once in discussions of measures, persons, and events.

The following passage, taken out of the midst of the speech of Æschines, will give our readers some idea of the stinging point with which this consummate orator could press his tremendous advantage upon his antagonist. (It is necessary only to explain, that after the battle of Chæroneia, Demosthenes, notwithstanding his inglorious conduct on the field, was chosen to pronounce the set formal oration on the fallen.) Notice the frequent lively shifting of aim, in the orator's words, back and forth, between Demosthenes himself directly accosted in the second person, and then again the listening assembly similarly addressed. The audience, by the way, was made up primarily of the Five Hundred composing the tribunal, and secondarily of a number to be counted perhaps by tens of thousands flocking from all parts of Greece to witness that great gladiatorial exhibition of oratory. Æschines draws an effective contrast between the spectacle presented when orphans by battle stood, according to ancient custom, in the theatre, solemnly introduced by the herald as children of the state—between this spectacle and that proposed by the decree

of Ctesiphon, namely, Demosthenes, maker of orphans by battle, the coward, the miscreant, standing in the same theatre to be honored with a crown. We give the passage:

> And here let us recall to mind those gallant men, whom he forced out to manifest destruction, without one sacred rite happily performed, one propitious omen to assure them of success; and yet, when they had fallen in battle, presumed to ascend their monument with those coward feet that fled from their post, and pronounced his encomiums on their merit. But O thou, who, on every occasion of great and important action, hast proved of all mankind the most worthless, in the insolence of language the most astonishing, canst thou attempt, in the face of these thy fellow-citizens, to claim the honor of a crown, for the misfortunes in which thou hast plunged thy city? Or, should he claim it, can you restrain your indignation, and has the memory of your slaughtered countrymen perished with them? Indulge me for a moment, and imagine that you are now not in this tribunal, but in the theatre, imagine that you see the herald approaching, and the proclamation prescribed in this decree, on the point of being delivered, and then consider whether will the friends of the deceased shed more tears at the tragedies, at the pathetic stories of the great characters to be presented on the stage, or at the insensibility of their country? What inhabitant of Greece, what human creature, who has imbibed the least share of liberal sentiments, must not feel the deepest sorrow, when he reflects on one transaction which he must have seen in the theatre, when he remembers, if he remembers nothing else, that on festivals like these, when the tragedies were to be presented, (in those times when the state was well governed and directed by faithful ministers,) a herald appeared, and introducing those orphans whose fathers had died in battle, now arrived at maturity, and dressed in complete armor, made a proclamation the most noble and the most effectual to excite the mind to glorious actions; that these youths, whose fathers lost their lives in fighting bravely for their country, the people had maintained to this their age of maturity; that now, having furnished them with complete suits of armor, they dismiss them, with prayers for their prosperity, to attend to their respective affairs, and invite them to aspire to the highest offices of the state.
>
> Such were the proclamations in old times, but such are not now heard. And, were the herald to introduce the person who had made these children orphans, what could he say or what could he proclaim? Should he speak in the form prescribed in this decree, yet the odious truth would still force itself upon you, it would seem to strike your ears with

a language different from that of the herald. It would tell you, that the Athenian people crowned this man, who scarcely deserves the name of a man, on account of his virtue, though a wretch the most abandoned, and on account of his magnanimity, though a coward and deserter of his post. Do not, Athenians, I conjure you by all the powers of heaven, do not erect a trophy in your theatre, to perpetuate your own disgrace. Do not expose the weak conduct of your country, in the presence of the Greeks, do not recall all their grievous and desperate misfortunes to the minds of the wretched Thebans, who, when driven from their habitations by this man, were received within these walls, whose temples, whose children, whose sepulchral monuments, were destroyed by the corruption of Demosthenes and the Macedonian gold.

Here is Æschines's fling at Demosthenes for his unhappy sentence on Alexander:

He called Alexander a Mar-gi'tes, and had the presumption to assert that he would never stir from Macedon, for that he would be satisfied with parading through his capital, and there tearing up his victims in the search of happy omens. And this, said he, I declare, not from conjecture, but from a clear conviction of this great truth, that glory is not to be purchased but by blood. The wretch! whose veins have no blood, who judged of Alexander, not from the temper of Alexander, but from his own dastardly soul.

What venom in that last exclamation! But Æschines is by no means mere mordant sarcasm. He has passages, if not of real, at least of well-simulated, moral sentiment and statesman-like gravity. Take the following paragraphs as instances:

And, now that I have mentioned crowns and public honors, while it yet rests upon my mind, let me recommend this precaution. It must be your part, Athenians, to put an end to this frequency of public honors, these precipitate grants of crowns, else they who obtain them will owe you no acknowledgment, nor shall the state receive the least advantage, for you never can make bad men better, and those of real merit must be cast into the utmost dejection. Of this truth, I shall convince you by the most powerful arguments. Suppose a man should ask, at what time this state supported the most illustrious reputation, in the present days or in those of our ancestors? With one voice you would reply, 'In the days of our ancestors.' At what time did our citizens

display the greatest merit? Then, or now? They were then eminent, now much less distinguished. At what time were rewards, crowns, proclamations, and public honors of every kind most frequent? Then, or now? Then they were rare and truly valuable, then the name of merit bore the highest lustre, but now it is tarnished and effaced, while your honors are conferred by course and custom, not with judgment and distinction.

It may possibly seem unaccountable, that rewards are now more frequent, yet that public affairs were then more flourishing, that our citizens are now less worthy, but were then of real eminence. This is a difficulty which I shall endeavor to obviate. Do you imagine, Athenians, that any man whatever would engage in the games held on our festivals, or in any others, where the victors receive a crown, in the exercises of wrestling, or in any of the several athletic contests, if the crown was to be conferred, not on the most worthy, but on the man of greatest interest? Surely no man would engage. But now as the reward of such their victory is rare, hardly to be obtained, truly honorable, and never to be forgotten; there are champions found, ready to submit to the severest preparatory discipline, and to encounter all the dangers of the contest. Imagine, then, that political merit is a kind of game, which you are appointed to direct, and consider that, if you grant the prizes to a few, and those the most worthy, and on such conditions as the laws prescribe, you will have many champions in this contest of merit. But, if you gratify any man that pleases, or those who can secure the strongest interest, you will be the means of corrupting the very best natural dispositions. . . .

In a democratic state, every man has a sort of kingly power, founded on the laws, and on our public acts, but when he resigns these into the hands of another, he himself subverts his own sovereignty. And then the consciousness of that oath, by which his sentence was to have been directed, pursues him with remorse.

The very close of the speech of Æschines is sadly marked with bathos:

And now, bear witness for me, thou Earth! thou Sun! O Virtue and Intelligence! and thou, O Erudition! which teaches us the just distinction between vice and goodness, I have stood up, I have spoken in the cause of Justice. If I have supported my prosecution with a dignity befitting its importance, I have spoken as my wishes dictated, if too deficiently, as my abilities admitted. Let what has now been offered, and what your own thoughts must supply, be duly weighed, and pronounce such a sentence as justice and the interests of the state demand.

That apostrophe to Earth, Sun, Virtue, Intelligence, Erudition, alas, why should Æschines have suffered it to escape him? There—as it were by some fatal necessity of self-expression compelling the orator—there it is, staring posterity in the face, a brand forever on his forehead so plain that a legend in words could hardly be plainer—'Know all men that I, Æschines, am at bottom chiefly a make-believe.'

We write thus, but not without a certain misgiving. We try to be true to our individual judgment, and we try to make our individual judgment true to the facts of every case with which we deal. But how can we be entirely sure that we are not unconsciously warped by general opinion—when we incline, as we do, in favor of Demosthenes against Æschines? We have, we confess, our fits of fearing that neither the one nor the other of these two great orators was a great man or a great patriot. But then again we rally to hold by Demosthenes, at the necessary cost of giving up Æschines.

The arrangement, the occasional recapitulation, the artful return to telling topics, are admirable in Æschines. But if the arrangement in Æschines marks him a master in the art of discourse, no less the lack of arrangement in Demosthenes does likewise for him. For in no other way than by confusion of order could Demosthenes effectually mask the weakness of his cause—its technical weakness, we mean. What accordingly he does is to keep his hearers constantly so employed in thought with things which make for himself, or things which make against his antagonist, that they willingly forget the technical points at which he is helplessly vulnerable. Regarded as an end in itself, Demosthenes's oration is irredeemably bad by confusion in arrangement. Regarded as means to an end, the oration, by virtue of that very confusion in arrangement, is transcendently good.

Demosthenes begins modestly, gravely, with winning appeal and deprecation in his tone. But his speech is very long,

and we shall not be able to indicate fully the course of it. Let us strike into the midst — at this point, bearing on Æschines's conclusion:

> But I must, it seems—though not naturally fond of railing, yet on account of the calumnies uttered by my opponent—in reply to so many falsehoods, just mention some leading particulars concerning him, and show who he is, and from whom descended, that so readily begins using hard words—and what language he carps at, after uttering such as any decent man would have shuddered to pronounce. Why, if my accuser had been Æacus, or Rhadamanthus, or Minos, instead of a prater, a hack of the market, a pestilent scribbler, I don't think he would have spoken such things, or found such offensive terms, shouting, as in a tragedy, 'O Earth! O Sun! O Virtue!' and the like; and again appealing to Intelligence and Education, by which the honorable is distinguished from the base—all this you undoubtedly heard from his lips. Accursed one! What have you or yours to do with virtue? How should you discern what is honorable or otherwise? How were you ever qualified? What right have you to talk about education? Those who really possess it would never say as much of themselves, but rather blush if another did; those who are destitute like you, but make pretensions to it from stupidity, annoy the hearers by their talk, without getting the reputation which they desire.

Demosthenes then goes into the life and character of Æschines. Whatever strength of instinctive repugnance Demosthenes really felt to indulging in personal abuse, he certainly overcame his repugnance with swimming success. Æschines is treated to a view of himself that he must have needed all his alleged effrontery to face without flinching. On the whole, it is rather depressing—the spectacle here exhibited of scurrilous personal epithets bandied between these two cultivated Athenians. The contrast in tone is enormous that separates these two speeches, from the two, for instance, in which Hayne and Webster fought each other in the Senate of the United States. True, the ancient cause debated was, in its essential nature, more personal than the modern. And Christianity is a diffusive moral influence very different from Olympianism. Yet after just discrimina-

tions made, there still is left a great remainder of moral superiority in favor of the American orators, to be credited, we think, to their individual characters. At least this is true for the case of Webster.

From personal abuse of Æschines, Demosthenes makes an easy transition to a detail of Hellenic history—in which we could not hope greatly to interest our readers. One graphic narrative, however, of his—a famous passage of oratoric description—will be read by every body with pleasure. How the life of Athens is made to live again in the following vivid verbal photograph of the circumstances attending the arrival in the city of news that El'a-te'a, a vital strategic point in the war against Macedon, was taken by Philip!

It was evening. A person came with a message to the presidents, that Elatea was taken. They rose from supper immediately, drove off the people from their market-stalls, and set fire to the wicker-frames; others sent for the generals and called the trumpeter; and the city was full of commotion. The next morning at day-break the presidents summoned the Council to their hall, and you went to the Assembly, and before they could introduce or prepare the question, the whole people were up in their seats. When the Council had entered, and the presidents had reported their intelligence and presented the courier, and he had made his statement, the crier asked—"Who wishes to speak?"—and no one came forward. The crier put the question repeatedly—still no man rose, though all the generals were present, and all the orators, and our country with her common voice called for some one to speak and save her—for when the crier raises his voice according to law, it may justly be deemed the common voice of our country. If those who desired the salvation of Athens were the proper parties to come forward, all of you and the other Athenians would have risen and mounted the platform; for I am sure you all desired her salvation—if those of greatest wealth, the three hundred—if those who were both, friendly to the state and wealthy, the men who afterward gave such ample donations; for patriotism and wealth produced the gift. But that occasion, that day, as it seems, called not only for a patriot and a wealthy man, but for one who had closely followed the proceedings from their commencement, and rightly calculated for what object and purpose Philip carried them on. A man who was ignorant of these matters, or had not

long and carefully studied them, let him be ever so patriotic or wealthy, would neither see what measures were needful, nor be competent to advise you.

Well, then, I was the man called for upon that day. I came forward and addressed you. What I said, I beg you for two reasons attentively to hear—first, to be convinced, that of all your orators and statesmen, I alone deserted not the patriot's post in the hour of danger, but was found in the very moment of panic speaking and moving what your necessities required; secondly, because at the expense of a little time you will gain large experience for the future in all your political concerns.

I said—

What Demosthenes "said" on that former occasion, briefly and admirably summarized now, we omit—explaining simply that he counseled amity and league with Thebes against Philip. The effect and sequel of his speech in this behalf he thus strikingly displays:

This and more to the like effect I spoke, and left the platform. It was approved by all; not a word was said against me. Nor did I make the speech without moving, nor make the motion without undertaking the embassy, nor undertake the embassy without prevailing on the Thebans. From the beginning to the end I went through it all; I gave myself entirely to your service, to meet the dangers which encompassed Athens.

Quintilian cites the next sentence to the last foregoing, as an example of climax, and Cicero imitates it in his oration for Milo. We are now within the suck of the rapids in which the oration of Demosthenes hastens on to take presently its sheer leap in the most magnificent cataract of eloquence in the world. Demosthenes gave his advice; but the event was not happy, though the advice was wise. Philip conquered, for all the statesmanship and eloquence of Demosthenes. Æschines had in his speech insisted on the misfortune of the event; Demosthenes now insists on the good faith and soundness of the advice. With fine indignation at Æschines, mute in counsel but blatant in blame, Demos-

thenes protests: "It was the duty of a good citizen, if he had any other plan, to disclose it at the time, not to find fault now." Then follows an extended passage which we shall not find it in our heart either to interrupt or to abridge, and which shall finish what we have here to give, by way of too little adequate exemplification, from Demosthenes:

A statesman and a pettifogger, while in no other respect are they alike, in this most widely differ. The one declares his opinion before the proceedings, and makes himself responsible to his followers, to fortune, to the times, to all men; the other is silent when he ought to speak; at any untoward event he grumbles. Now, as I said before, the time for a man who regarded the commonwealth, and for honest counsel, was then; however I will go to this extent—if any one now can point out a better course, or indeed if any other was practicable but the one which I adopted, I confess that I was wrong. For if there be any measure now discovered, which (executed then) would have been to our advantage, I say it ought not to have escaped me. But if there is none, if there was none, if none can be suggested even at this day, what was a statesman to do? Was he not to choose the best measures within his reach and view? That did I, Æschines, when the crier asked, "Who wishes to speak?"—not "Who wishes to complain about the past, or to guarantee the future?" Whilst you on those occasions sat mute in the Assembly, I came forward and spoke. However, as you omitted then, tell us now. Say, what scheme that I ought to have devised, what favorable opportunity was lost to the state by my neglect?—what alliance was there, what better plan, to which I should have directed the people?

But no! The past is with all the world given up; no one even proposes to deliberate about it; the future it is, or the present, which demands the action of a counselor. At the time, as it appeared, there were dangers impending, and dangers at hand. Mark the line of my policy at that crisis; don't rail at the event. The end of all things is what the Deity pleases; his line of policy it is that shows the judgment of the statesman. Do not, then, impute it as a crime to me that Philip chanced to conquer in battle; that issue depended not on me, but on God. Prove that I adopted not all measures that, according to human calculation, were feasible—that I did not honestly and diligently, and with exertions beyond my strength, carry them out—or that my enterprises were not honorable and worthy of the state, and necessary. Show me this, and accuse me as soon as you like. But if the hurricane that

visited us has been too powerful, not for us only, but for all Greece besides, what is the fair course? As if a merchant, after taking every precaution, and furnishing his vessel with every thing that he thought would insure her safety, because afterward he met with a storm and his tackle was strained or broken to pieces, should be charged with the shipwreck! "Well, but I was not the pilot," he might say; just as I was not the general—"Fortune was not under my control; all was under hers."

Consider and reflect upon this, If with the Thebans on our side we were destined so to fare in the contest, what was to be expected, if we had never had them for allies, but they had joined Philip, as he used every effort of persuasion to make them do? And if, when the battle was fought three days' march from Attica, such peril and alarm surrounded the city, what must we have expected, if the same disaster had happened in some part of our territory? As it was, do you see? we could stand, meet, breathe; mightily did one, two, three days help to our preservation; in the other case—but it is wrong to mention things of which we have been spared the trial by the favor of some deity, and by our protecting ourselves with the very alliance which you assail.

All this, at such length, have I addressed to you, men of the jury, and to the outer circle of hearers; for as to this contemptible fellow, a short and plain argument would suffice.

If the future was revealed to you, Æschines, alone, when the state was deliberating on these proceedings, you ought so have forewarned us at the time. If you did not foresee it, you are responsible for the same ignorance as the rest. Why, then, do you accuse me in this behalf, rather than I you? A better citizen have I been than you in respect of the matters of which I am speaking; (others I discuss not at present,) inasmuch as I gave myself up to what seemed for the general good, not shrinking from any personal danger, nor taking thought of any; whilst you neither suggested better measures, (or mine would not have been adopted,) nor lent any aid in the prosecuting of mine; exactly what the basest person and worst enemy of the state would do, are you found to have done after the event; and at the same time Aristratus, in Nax'os, and Ar-is-to-la'us, in Tha'sos, the deadly foes of our state, are bringing to trial the friends of Athens, and Æschines at Athens is accusing Demosthenes. Surely the man, who waited to found his reputation upon the misfortunes of the Greeks, deserves rather to perish than to accuse another; nor is it possible that one who has profited by the same conjunctures as the enemies of the commonwealth, can be a well-wisher of his country. You show yourself by your life and conduct, by your

political action, and even your political inaction. Is any thing going on that appears good for the people? Æschines is mute. Has any thing untoward happened or amiss? Forth comes Æschines—just as fractures and sprains are put in motion when the body is attacked with disease.

But since he insists so strongly on the event, I will even assert something of a paradox, and I beg and pray of you not to marvel at its boldness, but kindly to consider what I say. If, then, the results had been foreknown to all, if all had foreseen them, and you, Æschines, had foretold them and protested with clamor and outcry—you that never opened your mouth—not even then should the commonwealth have abandoned her design, if she had any regard for glory, or ancestry, or futurity. As it is, she appears to have failed in her enterprise, a thing to which all mankind are liable, if the Deity so wills it; but then—claiming precedency over others, and afterward abandoning her pretensions—she would have incurred the charge of betraying all to Philip. Why, had we resigned without a struggle that which our ancestors encountered every danger to win, who would not have spit upon you? Let me not say, the commonwealth or myself! With what eyes, I pray, could we have beheld strangers visiting the city, if the result had been what it is, and Philip had been chosen leader and lord of all, but other people without us had made the struggle to prevent it; especially when in former times our country had never preferred an ignominious security to the battle for honor?

For what Grecian or what barbarian is ignorant, that by the Thebans, or by the Lacedæmonians who were in might before them, or by the Persian king, permission would thankfully and gladly have been given to our commonwealth to take what she pleased and hold her own, provided she would accept foreign law and let another power command in Greece? But, as it seems, to the Athenians of that day such conduct would not have been national, or natural, or endurable; none could at any period of time persuade the commonwealth to attach herself in secure subjection to the powerful and unjust; through every age has she persevered in a perilous struggle for precedency and honor and glory. And this you esteem so noble and congenial to your principles, that among your ancestors you honor most those who acted in such a spirit; and with reason. For who would not admire the virtue of those men who resolutely embarked in their galleys and quitted country and home, rather than receive foreign law, choosing Themistocles who gave such counsel for their general, and stoning Cyr'si-lus to death who advised submission to the terms imposed—not him only, but your wives also stoning his wife? Yes; the Athenians of that day looked not for an orator or a general, who might help them to a pleasant servitude;

they scorned to live if it could not be with freedom. For each of them considered that he was not born to his father or mother only, but also to his country. What is the difference? He that thinks himself born for his parents only, waits for his appointed or natural end: he that thinks himself born for his country also, will sooner perish than behold her in slavery, and will regard the insults and indignities, which must be borne in a commonwealth enslaved, as more terrible than death.

Had I attempted to say, that I instructed you in sentiments worthy of your ancestors, there is not a man who would not justly rebuke me. What I declare is, that such principles are your own; I show that before my time such was the spirit of the commonwealth; though certainly in the execution of the particular measures I claim a share also for myself. The prosecutor, arraigning the whole proceedings, and embittering you against me as the cause of our alarms and dangers, in his eagerness to deprive me of honor for the moment, robs you of the eulogies that should endure forever. For should you, under a disbelief in the wisdom of my policy, convict the defendant, you will appear to have done wrong, not to have suffered what befell you by the cruelty of fortune. But never, never can you have done wrong, O Athenians, in undertaking the battle for the freedom and safety of all! I swear it by your forefathers —those that met the peril at Marathon, those that took the field at Platæa, those in the sea-fight at Salamis, and those at Artemisium, and many other brave men who repose in the public monuments, all of whom alike, as being worthy of the same honor, the country buried, Æschines, not only the successful or victorious! Justly! For the duty of brave men has been done by all, their fortune has been such as the Deity assigned to each.

Accursed scribbler! you, to deprive me of the approbation and affection of my countrymen, speak of trophies and battles and ancient deeds, with none of which had this present trial the least concern. But I!—O you third-rate actor!—I, that rose to counsel the state how to maintain her pre-eminence! in what spirit was I to mount the hustings? In the spirit of one having unworthy counsel to offer? I should have deserved to perish! You yourselves, men of Athens, may not try private and public causes on the same principles; the compacts of every-day life you are to judge of by particular laws and circumstances, the measures of statesmen, by reference to the dignity of your ancestors. And if you think it your duty to act worthily of them, you should every one of you consider, when you come into court to decide public questions, that together with your staff and ticket, the spirit of the commonwealth is delivered to you.

We should apprise our readers that in going from the Olynthiac oration to the Oration on the Crown, we exchanged translators, leaving Leland and taking up Kennedy. Kennedy is later than Leland. In merit, the two are not very unequal. Lord Brougham made an ambitious and painstaking experiment in the translation of Demosthenes on the Crown. To the claims of this work Mr. Kennedy does full justice in frequent allusion; but the work seems to us by no means equal to the translator's own fame as an orator.

The speech is still, at the point at which we arrest our hand, little more than two thirds done, and in what remains we feel many temptations to multiply extracts. But the heart of the speech we have given. Æschines, too, invoked those great names of Marathon and Platæa, but he with somehow an indefinably different effect. In the oath of Demosthenes there was genuine feeling; by defect of such feeling in the allusion of Æschines, the words that he uses sound empty and vain.

In truth, the two orators deal with very much the same topics, in very much the same manner, throughout their several orations. Each one lays claim to patriotism for himself, and charges treason or corruption upon the other. They both alike profess, each for himself, great respect for the laws, and great reverence for the lawgiver, Solon, with the rest of the worthies of former generations. One scarcely wonders that so luminous and candid a mind as the distinguished French historian of philosophy, Cousin, found in Demosthenes "nothing after all but a great orator." "Demagogical" the Frenchman openly calls the Greek. But Brédif, whose work on Demosthenes, for fullness of matter and brilliancy of treatment, deserves to be regarded as *the* work on this subject, does not agree with his countryman. "It would be difficult," says Brédif, in the course of quoting, more at large than we have done, Cousin's sentence on Demosthenes, "it would be difficult to compress more errors into fewer

words." (Brédif, by the way, is accessible in an English translation handsomely produced by Messrs. S. C. Griggs & Co., of Chicago.)

On the whole, as we have already intimated, our own instinct of hero-worship inclines us to side with Brédif, and against Cousin. Mankind needs great historic examples. Let us keep the Demosthenes that we have—a not perfect, but at least an heroic, figure, forever in act of La-oc'o-on's struggle with overmastering destiny—this not for himself, but for Athens.

Who this figure was, how he lived, that is, how he was born, how bred, what was his proportionate wealth, what his social position—even what manner of death he died—these are points of comparatively small concern. Such, at least, these points would seem, except that Demosthenes himself—with a qualm, it is true, real or affected, of reluctance overcome—lifts them into prominence in his speech against Æschines. It is mortifying to read now the pages of railing scurrility that Demosthenes has left immortal against Æschines—pages in the course of which he contrasts his own birth and breeding with the less happy condition of life enjoyed by his antagonist. We thus learn that Demosthenes was rich, well-educated, in short, quite of the aristocracy in that democracy of Athens. His death was as tragic as that of Cicero. He died, a suicide, by poison.

It was after the crowning triumph of his life, his victory over Æschines, that Demosthenes, with other Athenian citizens, was put on trial for embezzlement of certain funds deposited in Athens by a fugitive satrap of Alexander the Great. The supreme court, the Areopagus, judged Demosthenes to be guilty. They fined him fifty talents. Demosthenes would not, or could not, pay the fine, and he went into exile. Alexander meantime died, and wretched Greece made one desperate struggle more, a vain one, against Macedon, reigned over now by An-tip'a-ter in Alexander's

vacant room. Demosthenes—he had previously been recalled from exile—was part of the price for peace in servitude demanded from Athens by the conqueror. The orator fled; he was pursued; seeking sanctuary in a temple of Poseidon, he there, still ruthlessly hunted, sucked poison from his pen, and, dying, crawled, with his last strength, out to his pursuers, that his dead body might not defile the fane of the god. So perished Demosthenes, and with Demosthenes the greatest and the last of the free voices of Athens. But Demosthenes's voice has sounded more widely and more potently far, since it was silenced that day, than ever it sounded from the bema in Athens. And still it has "the wages of going on and not to die."

The American student of eloquence cannot do better than to make a careful comparison and contrast, founded on full knowledge, between the two orations of Æschines and Demosthenes, on the one hand, and the two orations of Hayne and Webster, on the other. We have signified our own agreement that Demosthenes was the greatest of orators. But this need not imply that the Oration on the Crown, though that be judged the masterpiece of its author, is the greatest of orations. The Reply to Hayne is, in our opinion, a greater speech than the Reply to Æschines. But our American feeling may be guessed to bribe our cosmopolitan judgment. We give accordingly an expression, less bold indeed than our own, but to similar import, from a distinguished German scholar and publicist, naturalized in America. This gentleman, to an almost vernacular familiarity with both the Greek and English tongue, and to almost a native's knowledge of Hellenic and American history, may be presumed to have joined a foreigner's as well as a scholar's exemption from national bias in the case. Dr. Francis Lieber, in a communication to Mr. Allibone, engaged at the time on his great work, the Dictionary of Authors, wrote:

"To test Webster's oratory, which has ever been very

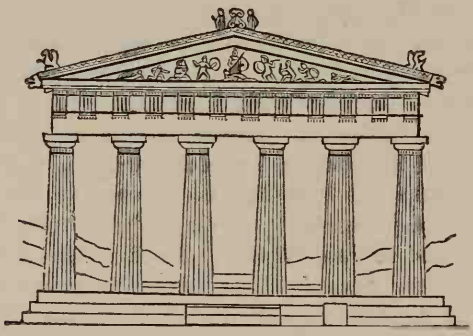
attractive to me, I read a portion of my favorite speeches of Demosthenes, and then read—always aloud—parts of Webster; then returned to the Athenian; and Webster stood the test. I have done it several times."

Greatness in a man's environment and in his opportunities, reacts powerfully to make the man himself great. If the scale of things into which Demosthenes was born, and in which he acted, had been as large as that which was provided for Webster, perhaps Demosthenes would have been enlarged to a man as great as was Webster. Perhaps if Christianity, instead of Olympianism, had been the atmosphere to Demosthenes, he might have been not less lofty than Webster in moral conception and tone.

Readers will hardly need to be reminded that Plutarch has a life of Demosthenes, and in a separate essay an elaborate parallel between that orator and Cicero. Let it be borne in mind that Demosthenes was nearly enough a contemporary of Plato to be (not improbably) reported as one of Plato's pupils, and it will easily be understood within how comparatively short a space of time for their production, the chief glories of ancient Greek literature—Homer always excepted—were embraced. Herodotus was the contemporary and friend of Sophocles; Sophocles was the contemporary of Plato; Plato was possibly the teacher of Demosthenes, and with Demosthenes the cycle of great original Greek literature may be said to have closed. After this came a literature of the decadence, imitative, parasitic—having its seat now at Alexandria, and now at Syracuse. The Greek literary spirit did not die at last, but it made a transmigration. It was first Hellenistic from being Hellenic, and then, partly through the Roman genius, it went indistinguishably, but vitally, into the various literatures that have flourished in Europe since the era of Christianity. It is not easy to see what can prevent it from living as long as literature itself shall live.

The next and final volume of this series will be the COLLEGE LATIN COURSE IN ENGLISH. In that volume, those of our present readers who hold long enough and follow far enough the clew that we put into their hands, will seem, in the procession of Latin authors there made to pass before their eyes, to recognize not a few familiar forms and faces and voices. Under the disguise of other names and of another speech, they will still be Greeks—those whom we shall there encounter in the lengthening labyrinth of letters. Along these mazy paths by eminence it is, that, starting from its ancient haunt in Athens,

Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.



TEMPLE OF ÆGINA RESTORED.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

We count with confidence on having among our readers many who will be students as well as readers. We make provision for these.

In the first place, we furnish a carefully prepared index of proper names, with pronunciation marked, and with reference given to the pages on which the most important matter concerning the topics thus indicated will be found. The chiefly prominent names are printed in type adapted to exhibit their prominence readily to the eye.

We suggest to studious readers that they will find it a very useful exercise to review their reading with the help of the index, by looking up all the passages relating to the different principal names successively, and—*after* this has been done, not *during* the process of doing it—to set down in writing the results that are left lodged in the memory. To facilitate the accomplishing of this purpose in a way to make the resultant record convenient to each reader for subsequent preservation and access, we bind into the volume a few blank leaves at the end. It will be well if these leaves be filled up, not simply with things remembered from the printed pages preceding, but with things brought from other sources, and especially with things thought out by the individual reader for himself. It is recommended that care be exercised beforehand to divide up the blank space provided, in some just proportion, among the various names to be entered. We know from our own private correspondence that some enterprising readers of the previous volumes have found no little

satisfaction in the part they have taken in thus themselves helping make the books that they use. Books into which you have in some sense put yourself, become thereby precious to you as the years go by.

But besides the index of names, we make another provision to aid students in the business of review and self-inspection. We give a list of questions to serve as stimulants to recollection, to reflection, and to further investigation.

Some readers will be curious to know the sources from which we derive the illustrations that enrich this volume. "The World of Herodotus" is photographically reduced to fit the present book, from the somewhat larger map in the Appletons' reprint of Rawlinson's "Herodotus." The bust of Herodotus, the "Ruins of Sardis," and the "Supposed Tomb of Cyrus" come from the same source. This American edition is much cheaper than the English, and it is sufficiently good for ordinary readers. Scholars will, of course, justly prefer the more expensive English form of the work—*in its latest edition.* The "Teiresias Denouncing Œdipus" is reproduced from the Century Magazine, which had a seasonable paper on the Greek Play at Harvard. The rest of the cuts, with one or two unimportant exceptions, are taken from an elaborate German work, entitled "Bilder-Atlas zur Weltgeschichte,"—which we might freely render, "Pictorial History of the World." (The German work, by the way, deserves to be reproduced here in a form adapted to the needs of the American public.) The originals of the German cuts were ancient statues, vases, urns, reliefs, coins, medals, etc.

As to the translations used in representing the various Greek authors—choice among them has been made with the utmost care. The resources of more than one great public library have, in some instances, been drawn upon in the quest of a highly desirable version, perhaps, of a single fragment of

Greek poetry. To illustrate the rarity of some of the books sought, we may mention that of Cary's translation of Pindar, curiously enough, we were not able to find a copy either on the New York importers' shelves, or in the great collection of the Astor Library. The latter much-criticised, but truly beneficent, however imperfectly administered, institution also failed on application to produce a copy either of Campbell's, or of Whitelaw's Sophocles. By dint of much pains, however, and through a sort of good fortune as well, we have, with the help of kind friends, found, in nearly every case of need, some satisfactory English version of the production chosen for exhibition to our readers. We have sufficiently indicated, in the text itself of the book, our own opinion of the comparative merits of the various chief rival versions that present themselves to distract the choice of the student in search of the best English form for the great Greek authors.

Literary tastes and standards change greatly from generation to generation, but it may, we think, safely be said that, for fifty years at least to come, the necessary work of English translation from Greek has, for the greater authors, been accomplished. If translations continue to be multiplied, it will be rather to gratify the ambition of those who make them, than to meet any real need on the part of those who will be invited to read them. The reading public now possess good enough English equivalents, in large enough variety, for the principal writers of classic Greek literature.

First, for the satisfaction of readers who like to know names, even if they cannot know the things to which the names belong, we condense, from Professor Jebb's admirable primer of Greek Literature, his already condensed account of the chief extant works, not previously mentioned in this volume, of the four Greek dramatists, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes. The other writers here represented, hardly, for the purpose of this book, require

further attention than that which they have received in previous pages:

Aeschylus.—In the *Seven against Thebes* (468 B. C.) we are shown how the inherited curse in the house of Œdipus is visited on his sons, Eteocles and Polyneices, who slay each other in single combat when the Argives, under Adrastus, besiege Thebes. . . . *The Suppliants* are the fifty daughters of Danaus, who have fled with their father from Egypt to Argos, in order to avoid marrying their first cousins, the fifty sons of Aegyptus. The Argive king, Pelasgus, receives and protects them.

Sophocles.—The play called the *Trachiniae*, or *Women of Trachi.*, because these form the chorus, tells how Deianeira, living at Trachis in Thessaly, learns that Heracles has fallen in love with Iolê, and sends him a robe anointed with the blood of the Centaur Nessus, knowing not that it is aught but a harmless love charm; and how Heracles, in mortal torment from the poison, bids his son Hyllus take him to the top of Mount Oeta, and lay him on a funeral pyre; and thence, 'wrapped in heavenly flame, is gathered to the host of the gods.' . . . The *Ajax* opens on the morning after Ajax—in the frenzy with which Athene punished his pride—has butchered the cattle of the Greeks, thinking that he was slaying the Greek chiefs who had slighted him by giving the armor of Achilles to Odysseus. When reason returns, he is overwhelmed with the sense of dishonor, and kills himself. The *Electra* shows us the vengeance taken by Orestes on his mother Clytaemnestra and on Aegisthus—the theme treated in the *Choephori* of Aeschylus and the *Electra* of Euripides; but has a clearer artistic unity than the former, and more ideal beauty than the latter. . . . The *Antigone* is a yet later chapter in the story of the house [of Thebes]. The two sons of Oedipus, Polyneices, the assailant of Thebes, and Eteocles, its champion, have slain each other in single combat. Creon, king of Thebes, has decreed that no one, on pain of death, shall pay the rites of burial to Polyneices; but Antigone sets the unwritten law of the gods above the edict of man, and renders the last honors to her brother's corpse, and is put to death by Creon, whose son, the lover of Antigone, and that son's mother, slay themselves, cursing him.

The scene of the *Philoctetes* (409 B. C.) is laid on the desolate isle of Lemnos. Ten years ago, the hero, Philoctetes, suffering from a noisome wound in the foot, was left there in his sleep by the Greeks, at the instance of Odysseus, as they sailed against Troy; but now they need him, since he has the bow of Heracles, by which alone—so say the gods—Troy can be taken. Odysseus persuades Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, to help him in a base scheme for seizing Philoctetes, or stealing his bow; the scheme has succeeded when the young man's better nature revolts against it. If Philoctetes will not come with them to Troy, Neoptolemus will not steal his bow. At this moment the divine Heracles himself appears; Philoctetes learns the health and glory that await him at Troy; and gladly obeys his summoners. . . .

Euripides.—The *Hippolytus*, which gained the first prize, tells how that son of Theseus was cursed by his father, and perished, when his step-

mother Phaedra had falsely accused him of assailing her honor; and how Theseus, when his son is dying before his eyes, learns the truth, too late, from Artemis, the goddess of chastity. The play alludes to the recent death of Pericles (429 B. C.). Racine used this plot in his *Phèdre*. The *Hecuba* (425 B. C.) sets forth the vengeance of the widowed queen of Troy on Polymestor, who had slain her son Polydorus and carried off her daughter Polyxena. The *Andromache* (424–422 B. C.?) turns on the fortunes of her who was once Hector's wife and is now the captive of Neoptolemus, son of Achilles. It bears the mark of the Peloponnesian War in a celebrated invective against the Spartan character.

The *Ion*, (424–421,) one of the finest plays, of which the scene is laid at Delphi, unfolds how Ion, founder of the Ionian race and of the Attic tribes, was, in truth, the son of Apollo by Creusa, daughter of Erectheus. . . . In the *Suppliants* (420–417 B. C.?) Athens appears as the champion of humanity against Creon, king of Thebes, who has refused burial to the Argive warriors slain before its walls. So, too, in the *Heracleidae* (of like date) Athens becomes a city of refuge to the children of Heracles, persecuted by Eurystheus, once their dead father's taskmaster. The *Mad Heracles* (420–417 B. C.?) tells how Heracles, driven mad by his enemy, the goddess Hera, (Juno,) murders his wife, Megara, and his children, and on recovering his senses is going to kill himself; when King Theseus soothes his despair, and persuades him to seek grace and peace at Athens.

Of the *Iphigenia among the Tauri*, the scene is laid at Balaclava in the Crimea. Iphigenia, rescued by the miraculous intervention of Artemis from the death to which her father had doomed her, has become a priestess in the temple of that goddess, where human victims are sacrificed. She is called upon to immolate two strangers, when she discovers them to be her brother Orestes and his friend Pylades. She plans their escape; and finally, by command of the goddess Athene, Thoas, the king of the land, allows all three to go back to Greece, where they found the worship of Artemis at Halae and Brauron in Attica. The *Troades* (415 B. C.) is concerned with the sorrows of noble Trojan dames, Hecuba, Andromache, Cassandra, just after the fall of Troy. The *Helen* (412 B. C.) turns on the story, made popular by the lyric poet Stesichorus in his 'recantation,' that only a wraith of Helen went to Troy; the real Helen went to Egypt, and was rescued from its king, Theoclymenus, by a trick of her disguised lord, Menelaus.

The *Phoenissae* (411 B. C.) deals with the war levied against Thebes by the Argives in support of the claim of Polyneices to the throne against that of his brother Eteocles. The chorus consists of 'Phœnician maidens,' brought from Tyre to serve in the temple of Apollo at Delphi, and detained at Thebes by the outbreak of the war. . . .

The *Electra*, (410 B. C.,) on the same theme as the Choephori of Æschylus and the Electra of Sophocles, well illustrates the poet's manner. His Electra is a reduced gentlewoman, living in the cottage of a worthy man with whom she has gone through the forms of marriage. In the *Orestes* (408 B. C.) Apollo rescues Helen from the sword of Orestes, who has gone mad after murdering his mother.

The *Iphigenia at Aulis* and the *Bacchae* were brought out after the poet's death by his son, the younger Euripides. The former shows how Iphigenia, doomed by her father, Agamemnon, to be sacrificed at Aulis in order

that the wind might become fair for the Greek fleet, was rescued by the goddess Artemis, who carried the maiden off to her temple among the Tauri in the Crimea. In the *Bacchae* ('female Bacchants') Pentheus, king of Thebes, arrests the disguised god Dionysus, who has brought his wild bacchanal revelry among the Thebans. But the god takes a terrible vengeance. The king is rent in pieces by his own mother Agâvê and her companions, in the frenzy of their bacchant orgies. . . .

The *Cyclops* is the only specimen of a satyr-drama that we have. It turns on the adventure of Odysseus with Polyphêmus, and has a good deal of rollicking buffoonery, but little wit, and is not too short at 700 lines. The *Rhesus*, which used to be attributed to Euripides, is now generally supposed to be by some indifferent poet of the latest Attic time.

Aristophanes.— . . . The *Acharnians*, (425 B. C.,) a plea for the peace-party against the war-party, the latter being represented by the men of Acharnae, whose vineyards have been laid waste by the Peloponnesians. . . . In the *Wasps*, (422 B. C.,) on which Racine founded *Les Plaideurs*, we are shown how the demagogues treat their deluded allies, the citizens who form the large juries in the law-courts. The *Peace* (421 B. C.) resumes the purpose of the 'Acharnians.' Trygaeus, a distressed Athenian, flies up to heaven on a beetle, and there finds the gods engaged in pounding the Greek states in a mortar. He succeeds in liberating the goddess Peace from her prison, and winning her blessings for Greece. . . . The *Lysistrata* appeared just before, the *Thesmophoriazusae* just after, the reign of terror established by the Four Hundred in 411 B. C. In the former, the women seize the government, with a view to ending the Peloponnesian War. In the latter, Euripides is tried and condemned at the female festival of the Thesmophoria. . . .

The *Ecclesiazusae* (392) shows how the 'Women in Parliament' contrived to frame a new constitution. The *Plutus* (388 B. C.) relates how eye-sight was restored to the god of wealth, who proceeds to enrich the good and beggar the wicked.

It will be remarked that Professor Jebb, whose orthography we strictly follow, does not fall in with the extreme tendency obtaining among English scholars to spell Greek words by close transliteration. We have ourselves occasionally been inconsistent in not observing a uniform rule. The present is a time of transition from one English orthography of Greek words to another.

QUESTIONS.

1. What difference distinguishes ancient times from modern as regards the extent to which communication of thought was then carried on by means of address to the ear instead of the eye?

2. To what cause or causes may the difference be attributed?

3. Do you think that literature could be produced and preserved without *written* language to serve as a means?

4. If it could, in what form, that of prose or that of verse, would literature be likely to take its rise?

5. What effect on the style of authors would naturally result from their being obliged to depend simply on the ears of their patrons for intelligent appreciation?

6. What peculiar educating effect on the minds of people would naturally result from their being obliged to receive communications of thought solely through the medium of the ear?

7. What would be the twofold influence thus exerted in the development of oratory?

8. Which habit, that of addressing the ear, or that of addressing the eye, would naturally react more upon an author to make him a good story-teller?

9. Which of the two habits would tend more to make the exact and trustworthy historian?

10. Do you think a literature of criticism could be produced and preserved in the absence of written language?

11. Do you recognize a difference between Homer and Herodotus in point of simplicity and genuineness?

12. What are the several distinguishing characteristics of Herodotus and Thucydides?

13. Which way does the balance of indebtedness incline as between Socrates and Plato; that is, which one owes more to the other for the fame that he enjoys?

14. What has been the extent, and what the quality, of the influence exerted respectively by Plato and Aristotle?

15. What effect on the perfecting of a literature would naturally result from the massing together of writers within the bounds of a single city like Athens?

16. Would criticism actively in process at the same time with creation tend more to stimulate or to depress productive ambition, and zeal for literary perfection, in authors?

17. What influence is exerted by political freedom enjoyed by a people to affect that people's achievement in literature?

18. To what degree is the difference in quality between, for instance, the Athenian literature, represented by Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, on the one hand, and Syracusan literature, represented by Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, on the other, traceable to different political conditions environing the authors respectively?

19. In what respects principally was ancient Greek tragedy different from the tragedy of modern times?

20. What were the salient characteristics respectively of the three great Greek tragedists?

21. What were the chief distinctive traits of Greek comedy as represented by Aristophanes?

22. What peculiar circumstances existed to foster the development of Greek lyric poetry?

23. What were the characteristics of Pindar's lyric style and method?

24. What were the chief distinguishing traits of the poetry of Theocritus?

25. What distinct form or variety of poetical composition can you think of that is not exemplified in the literature of Greece?

26. What were the characteristic traits of the oratory of Demosthenes? Of Æschines?

27. What is your own judgment, formed independently from the specimens submitted of the orators themselves, concerning the comparative personal deserts of Æschines and Demosthenes?

28. Is it a benefit, or is it an injury, to a community to be subject to the influence of eloquent popular orators?

It will, perhaps, gratify some curious readers if, in a select capital instance, we afford still further facilities for comparison of one translation of Greek poetry with another. Prof. Jebb's elaborate edition of Sophocles, now issuing in sumptuous form from the Cambridge University Press, gives us satisfactory means of doing this. From the first volume, the only volume that has thus far appeared of that work, we take the following passage occurring in the parallel prose translation that accompanies the Greek text of the Œdipus Tyrannus. This is a translation the principle of which, Prof. Jebb says, is "absolute fidelity to the original; not to the letter of the original at the cost of the spirit, but to the spirit as expressed in the letter:"

May destiny still find me winning the praise of reverent purity in all words and deeds sanctioned by those laws of range sublime, called into life throughout the high, clear heaven, whose father is Olympus alone; their parent was no race of mortal men, no, nor shall oblivion ever lay them to sleep; a mighty god is in them, and he grows not old.

Insolence breeds the tyrant; Insolence, once vainly surfeited on wealth that is not meet nor good, when it hath scaled the crowning height, leaps on the abyss of doom, where no service of the feet can serve. But I pray that the god never quell such rivalry as benefits the State; the god will I ever hold for our protector.

But if any man walks haughtily in deed or word, with no fear of justice, no reverence for the images of gods, may an evil doom seize him for his ill-starred pride, if he will not win his vantage fairly, nor keep him from unholy deeds, but must lay profaning hands on sanctities. Where such things are, what mortal shall boast any more that he can ward the arrows of the gods from his life? Nay, if such deeds are in honor, wherefore should we join in the sacred dance?

No more will I go reverently to earth's central and inviolate shrine, no more to Abae's temple or Olympia, if these oracles fit not the issue, so that all men shall point at them with the finger. Nay, king—if thou art rightly called—Zeus all ruling, may it not escape thee and thine ever-deathless power!

The old prophecies concerning Laïus are fading; already men are setting them at naught, and nowhere is Apollo glorified with honors; the worship of the gods is perishing.

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Readers will simply need to be reminded that *ch* in Greek words is always sounded like *k*, that *es* final has the sound of *eez*, that *g* in English pronunciation of Greek names, elsewhere hard, is, before e, i, or y, *always* soft, and that *x* initial is sounded like *z*.

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THE END.

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This last poem, of which a select portion was read at the late centennial anniversary, commemorative of Webster, at Marshfield, is also published by Charles Scribner's Sons in a separate volume accompanied with copious illustrative notes. As thus published, it received notice in terms indicated by expressions like the following: "Dense with thought and tense with impassioned and imaginative fervor . . . No imperfect rhymes or laboring measures . . . Consummate art and unmistakable genius . . . A true order of poetry, unusual indeed, if not original, but perfect in the essential attributes of poetry . . . Majestic pathos . . . Glorious poetry," etc.—**Baptist Quarterly Review**, (in a body article.)—— "We agree with him" [the critic].—**Independent**, (reviewing the Quarterly.)——"Stately poem." — **Cincinnati Commercial.**——"A magnificent poem." — **Boston Herald.**——"Written in a large and noble style." — **Boston Advertiser.**——"A unique and magnificent tribute." — **The Advance** (Chicago).

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